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ACCENT
A QUARTERLY OF NEW LITERATURE
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HARRIS DOWNEY:

Caught

It was August. The heat pressed down the branches of the elder and the mass of coffee weeds in the fields.

The lush foliage of summer was still. Only the mimosa tree stirred; the current that moved it was so delicate that the long seed pods hung as stiff as bronze and the ragged off-season blooms sat among the leaves like balls.

The mimosa grew against the cabin but neither it nor the china-ball tree cast any shade on the roof; heat rose from the tin in waves.

Everything was silent but for the hum of bumblebees in the clematis vine of the porch and the occasional crow of a rooster that sat in the sun between the shade of the elder and the mimosa tree. It was an old black rooster with hackle and saddle of gray. He sat with his beak hanging open and his eyes closed. From time to time he would rise, stretch his neck, blast the stillness with his raucous crow, and drop again to his pool of dust.

The blinds of pine board were partially closed against the glare; yet the heat was as great inside the cabin as it was in the sun.

Two partitions divided the cabin into three rooms. In the front room an old negro lay in bed, his pillows propped against the iron rods of the bedstead that curved themselves into the shape of a harp. His head was bald but for a fringe of hair, short, kinky, and white. His chin and cheeks were as hairless as his forehead but two long mustaches, gray-white as his pillows, stretched from under his nose like

masquerade. His hands clutched the quilt under his chin.

The blind by the bed was partly open to the shadow of the mimosa tree and, though the room was almost dark, there was too much light for the old man's eyes. The lashless lids were heavier than the logs of his youth, or the sacks of feed, or the stray sheep that had to be lifted over the sty. He opened his eyes barely a thread, summoning all his strength to orient himself in time and place: *I yit in the bed . . . It's the daytime.*

Through the crack of the blind he saw a mimosa branch. In its mass of green foliage were three blossoms, fat pom-poms of pink, and above it was a stretch of blue sky, blinding bright. The branch was a green field slanting a hill and the blossoms were pink-ginghamed women working among indistinguishable rows.

"Lena!" Often he dreamed of being unable to run or cry out when, in the dark of night, he opened the door of the outhouse and saw a great white ghost sitting on the hole. His hand would be stuck to the rope handle of the door and his cry would well in his throat, then roll out of his mouth — as silent as thistle falling on the air. Often when he called from his bed he was uncertain whether he made any sound at all or called only as he called in the dream. "Lena!"

"Oh mighty!" The protest was like a sigh. She was sitting in the kitchen, her bare feet spread apart, her head bent towards her lap. Her gums were clamped tight on a cold cob-pipe. With one hand she held her scalp to her head and with the other she yanked the comb through her matted gray hair. She was dressed in a long white dress like a gown.

"Lena!"

"Gon' drive me crazy," she said. She stuck the comb in her hair, grasped the edge of the table, slid forward, and got up as carefully as if the chair were a rocking boat. At the door to his room, she held back the curtain and impatiently asked: "What you want, Jim Pa?"

But she didn't expect any answer. She had spoken just as she spoke to her rooster, to a rat scampering through the yard, to her wood stove, to the Lord, to all of those things that she habitually complained to and that never answered. Maybe he had fallen asleep again and she would not have to bother. She squinted against the darkness of the room as he had squinted against the light. Deep in the pillow, the old face was only a black hole with two furry tails hanging out, white and still.

"Lena!"

"Dere you go." She came to the bed and called out. "What you want?

"It's mornin'," he said. He did not open his eyes. There was no need. She was there. He was no more blind than deaf but it was easier to hear than to see. It was such an effort to open the eyes. And when he listened — when he really came awake — he felt the comfort of her being near. She existed as sound: the dropping of wood on the kitchen floor, the rattling of pans, and the voice. And when not sound, she was touch, her hands as intimate as his thoughts — feeding him, cleaning him, changing his bed. Her sounds and her touch were his wakefulness, his consciousness of being alive.

"It's evenin'," she said. "Pas' one o'clock. What you want?"

He wanted his syrup. "My su'up," he said. "You got my su'up yit?"

"Goin' now, like I tole you, to git it."

"The women is out in the pea field yit."

"There ain't no pea field, Jim Pa. Now you git some res'." The pea field and the women had become an argument between them.

"They *there*." He opened his eyes, saw her standing beside him. Then he closed them again. He did not like to look at her, for then she was a stranger who might turn and go away forever. "They all dressed in red. Pickin' peas."

She had looked out before and had seen only the weeds. But the women? What did he think was women? She went past his bed and looked out. Tiney, the rooster, had struggled to his feet and was flapping his wings. "Sho' ain't no women." She stood gazing at the rooster until he stretched his neck, blasted the droning afternoon, and dropped down again. "Gotta go feed my rooster." She pulled the blind nearly shut.

She finished combing her hair and bound it up in a cloth. She put on an old pair of canvas shoes and, about her waist, tied a long white apron.

In the yard, she put a plate of scraps — greens and corn-bread — before Tiney as if he were a dog. She touched his wing. "Eat your dinner." Tiney got up, walked off a way, spread his wings tentatively, and, stretching the hackle from his back, gave a long crow.

The mimosa tree had almost no trunk at all; it was a cluster of limbs leaning together and crossing one another like the sticks of a broken fan. In one of the low forks of the tree, Lena sat down and watched the rooster.

From out of nowhere an old hen came up to the plate. The woman

got up, started to spread her arms: *Shu!* But she blinked her eyes in the glaring sun. It was her old dominecker. "Where you bin, hin?" She always was a silly old hen. "Thought the ole fool was et."

"Creola!" He was always calling her by a wrong name, lying there in the bed mixing his sleep with his waking, mixing the weeds with a pea field, mixing her with a lot of niggers she'd never heard tell of.

She pulled back the blind and looked into the window. "Don't call me by no Creola," she yelled.

"You git my su'up?"

"Ain't gone yit. Now you stop that callin'. I gotta long ways to go."

The coffee weeds were as high as her shoulders. They overhung the path. She pulled her apron and dress around her legs, holding them gently in a loose fold before her as though she were carrying a hot skillet. But the weeds brushed against her. "The drought gon' git you 'fore you make your seeds. I hope to the Lord it do."

The dust was thick in the lane. Still folding her dress in front of her, she pulled it up as high as her knees. She lifted her feet straight up in the air and put them down gingerly like a cat walking through grass. But the dust rose in little explosions, billowed directionless, then rolled suddenly forward to follow her. The weeds at the side of the road were blanketed gray. The corn stalks in the field were bent and brown. "If you drap a match, the whole world go up in a flame," she said. Then she bent forward and threw her feet out in a shuffling gait, still holding her dress before her in both hands. The dust turned back like earth from a plow, spread over the lane, and hung there.

The lane dipped down the hollow. The trees hung over like a cave. "Come all you trees and shelter this world." On one side of the lane there was an embankment as high as her head; on the other there was a marsh. "All you oaks and ash. You buckeye and pine." She was looking up at the trees on the embankment. "Now where that puckawn tree? Ole alligator, if you sittin' up in that puckawn tree waitin' to fall on me, you jes as well sidle back to your swamp. I ain't no unsuspectin' nigger." She peered ahead. "There it yonder. There the puckawn tree." She crossed to the other side of the lane, brushing against the honeysuckle.

Beyond the hollow she passed a row of cabins. She saw a woman in a red dress out in a garden picking crowder peas. She stopped and watched her. "You s'pose —?" she said, but she shook her head. "Dat cain't be what he see."

At the end of the lane she turned into a gravel road. She spread her eyes wide and prodded her toe against a pile of scrap wood by

the ditch. "Gon' git me that wood," she said, "don' some nigger steal it 'fore I git back."

At Mr. Ben's store, Mr. Ben said: "The older you get the more you eat. How many men you keeping now, Lena?" He looked over at an old white man who was leaning against the ice-box drinking a bottle of pop.

Fifteen years before, she had deeded her ten acres to Mr. Ben. In return he had agreed to furnish her provisions until she died. In order to discount his advantage in the bargain he had begun almost immediately to chide her about her everlastingness and her gluttony. He hadn't expected her to live so long and even now that it seemed she would get the better of him he still made his defense — especially when others were present. It had become habit.

She didn't mind his jokes, but she didn't answer him. She sat down on a box and began flapping her handkerchief against her neck.

Mr. Ben was unpacking a carton of pepper. He ignored her. After a while she would say, "I come for some side-meat" or "I need me some coffee." It would do no good to ask her what she wanted. She would only reply, "Cain't talk tu' after I catch my bref," or, in winter, "tu' after I warm my bones," though sometimes, when Mr. Ben was alone, she would say "tu' after I recollects."

"I'm outa that su'up for Jim Pa," she said. She never turned to him but kept staring out the door to the road.

The syrup was a tonic and not strictly a provision. But their bargain had grown complex through exceptions and modifications far beyond the reach of legal definitions. Mr. Ben's protests were only formality. "Ain't that man of yours ever gonna get well?"

"Ain't no man of mine. He my papa."

He had heard this before. Yet, starting around to the other counter, he said, "Can't be your papa."

She was silent for a while, as though she had decided to pay him no mind. Then suddenly she asked, "How come?"

"Can't nobody be older than you." And when he handed her the bottle of brown liquid, he added: "We couldn'na made our agreement . . . if he was your papa."

"He my papa all right," she said. "He older un me. He in the bed."

She got up and started out the door so quickly that he had to call after her: "What else you need, Lena?"

She came back. Whenever she was doubtful, she said either corn meal or coffee. "Mite o' corn meal," she said.

On the way back, she forgot to look for the scrap wood, forgot even to skirt the pecan tree. Her mind was filled with remembering. She talked to herself — even stopped from time to time to study what she was saying — but she said nothing to the trees or the swamp, didn't look once at the cabins that, sitting in a row, their board shutters and doors closed against the sun, always reminded her of old hens asleep on a roost.

"Course he's my pa," she kept saying. But the more she said it, the more doubtful she grew.

* * *

It seemed that he had been lying in the bed with the quilt under his chin for years and years. But she could remember him sitting by the kitchen stove teasing the fire — or out under the shadetree chunking chinaballs at the mocking birds. Beyond that she lost him. He had always been an old man, no-count-no-more, sitting around and lying around, calling for his food and his tobacco and his syrup. She could remember him only when he and she were alone, long past the time that all the others had gone.

Among the kinfolks and friends that once crowded her life, she couldn't single him out at all. But then she couldn't single out anyone else. In her memory there were all sorts of people — going away, coming in, always changing somehow. But she couldn't pin them down, couldn't remember their faces. And under their feet or sitting at the table or falling out of the chinaball tree there were always a lot of children — their hair plaited in ribbons, a nail stuck in their foot, or their little black fists pushing lightning bugs into a bottle. They'd go out the back door, barefoot and half naked, a piece of bread in their hand and snot under their nose. Then they'd come in the front, grown up with a mouth full of teeth and with new city clothes, smelling of cologne, and saying *How-do.*

If she could get them together, she'd have enough to populate a whole town. Yet she was certain that, could she conjure up their faces, she would be able to call them by name. But eyes, gestures, voices were fever in her recollection, flowing sideways up and sideways down like things looked at against the sun; she could never adjust them to the vision of any definite person. Even her children were like words that you understand when you hear them, familiar and fit, but that you yourself could no more call to mind than if they didn't exist at all.

" 'Fore the Lord, he my pa," she said. She stopped in the lane. The

dust moved ahead of her, hesitated, and seemed to look back, waiting. "Now when did he come to live at my house?" The wrinkles drew tight round her eyes, almost forcing them shut. And there flowed through her mind some of the pictures that had always stayed round her, like the stuff on her mantelpiece — so familiar as hardly to be noticed at all. But now she studied them just to be able to set them aside as she might set aside the bric-a-brac of her mantel while looking for some especial object misplaced: "That ain't it" and "It ain't under there."

The pictures of her memory were endless: her boy Enoch with a whirring locust flying from a string; somebody's kid walking round the yard on his heel, chicken mess on his foot; her sister Ellie's hand that somebody brought home from the sawmill in a sack. She could see the littlest details of such pictures: how the dime tied round her ankle flashed in the sun as she worked down the cotton row, now fast and now slow, to reach the end by the canebrake at the same time some man did. But the pictures were not complete: What happened to Ellie? And who was that man she wanted to meet in the canes? The pictures were no good — not for remembering; they never had faces. She brushed her hand over her forehead as if to wipe them away. She walked on, and the dust jumped up beside her like a pup excited at moving again.

She remembered her husbands. At least she remembered their names — Zeekial and Jason and Black. There had been others but they had never stayed long, couldn't rightly have been thought of as husbands. "Jim couldn'na been none o' them." Black died an old man; she was certain there had been none after him.

Bent forward towards the billow of dust, she shook her head like an old black toy. "An' if he ain't my pa, who he is? How he got in my house? . . . Now how that ole man got in my house? In my bes' bed! I sho' gon' find out. 'Fore the Lord, I sho' gon' see." She came through the coffee weeds like a gar cutting the waves.

Shadows of gum trees fell on the mimosa, brightening its flowers. She stopped. "It's them *flowers*, do Jesus. That's what he see!" She stared at the tree as though it were a miracle. "Gon' pull 'em off jes' to shet his mouf."

She shot forward, stumbling against Tiney, who, hearing her voice, had risen and was poking his neck towards a crow. She nearly fell. Tiney gawked violently and flapped himself into a cloud of dust.

She pulled the blind fully open, looked in. "Jim Pa!" she yelled. The

old man lay still, not hearing. She put her packages on the sill. "Watch me git yo' women outa the field." She knew he couldn't hear, but she talked on. "Better wake up, you bug-eyed bear. You got a lot o' talkin' to do." She turned towards the tree. The flowers were beyond her reach.

She took off her shoes. "Ain't climbed a tree since Hector," she said. "Don' wanna tear my apron." She went up; but, when she reached out, she slipped. Her foot caught between two of the branches angling together. Her head struck one of the lower limbs, and her dress fell down about her.

* * *

The old man was weak. He had opened his eyes to the light and to the dark — he couldn't tell how many times. He had called. He had groaned. He wondered whether he had only dreamed that she never came.

He had heard the women out in the field singing a low sad song like a moan. Then for ever so long everything had been quiet except for the crow of the rooster.

He was thirsty. He was hungry. In his bed there was an awful smell. Something was wrong. He had to come awake: "I gotta git out o' this bed."

When he opened his eyes, the light was so bright he could hardly see. "Lena!" His voice seemed to come from outside.

He saw the women still out in the field. A big black cloud like a wobbling bird fell down from the sky and covered them. "It's a omen," he thought. "It's a cloud like a buzzard."

His mind was full of dreams and he couldn't awaken. "I'm goin' to die."

He thought he jumped up and ran down the lane, swinging his arms and whistling, the smell of fried chicken coming over the pasture, leading him on. Then he felt his fingers against his chin and the heavy quilt on his chest. "Cain't tell what's in this world and what's in the next. Maybe I'm already dead and cain't git away."

Then he thought he sat bolt up in bed and saw Lena hanging by her feet in the tree like a little old girl showing off to the boys — her old backside, big as a buzzard and nearly as black, shining in the sun that splayed through the leaves.

"Lena!" he called but he couldn't hear his voice. "Lena! Lena!" But he wasn't certain whether he had come awake at all; he was scared that he was caught in a dream.

A. M. KLEIN:

The Black Panther (A Study in Technique)

Imitatio Dei

The art of the first chapter of *Ulysses,* the commentators agree, is theology; and in support of their assertion they point with an obvious pertinence to the great number of ecclesiastic gestures and theological terms in which the chapter abounds. Buck Mulligan speaks in "a preacher's tone," he is "untonsured," his face and jowl "recall a prelate." Allusions to the saints are frequent, and frequent the meditations upon the church and its triumphs over heresy. Benedictions are uttered, the sign of the cross is made, and there is much counting by threes. God, whether as Essence or expletive, is everywhere.

This proof of the chapter's concern with things sacred does seem, however, to postulate a method of equation much too facile for it to have recommended itself to the fastidious and paradigmatic mind of James Joyce. Throughout the text haphazardly to sow religious symbols and then to proclaim that text as of texture theologic is not at all Joyce's way of encompassing his ends. To him, as numerous instances show, design and pattern are of a primary importance: the text sometimes may appear incoherent, the structure never is.

Moreover, complaisance with so easy a theory of the theological process in *Telemachus* must inevitably leave in the text a number of difficulties embarrassingly unresolved. Who is Seymour? Who is Clive Kempthorpe? What is the pertinence of the remark about the red Carlisle girl, Lily? After this chapter, none of these persons will be mentioned again. Why is the Englishman, whose real name, as Dr. Gogarty recalls, was Trench, here rendered Haines? What is the aesthetic compulsion which motivates the reference to the black panther? Upon what principles are selected the various quotations of poetry and verse? Is it only verbal association which dictates the lengthy interior monologues, or is there here some other element at play? And what kind of nickname, in 1904, is Kinch? Or epithet: *dogsbody?* Why is Kinch a knifeblade?

These, and an entire catechism of questions which will present themselves, as their answers in the following paragraphs are suggested, can be met, it is submitted, not through the adding up of a list of

discrete allusions, but only through the acceptance of a theological hypothesis, consistent and complete, — only through a recognition of the daring, and — were it more explicit — the blasphemous, adumbration which casts its cruciform shadow over the entire chapter.

For behind its comparatively innocent and routine action, behind the small talk and big words of *Telemachus,* there is figured, in abbreviated form, a contemporary counterpart of the life of Christ, an *Imitatio Dei* of the year 1904. In this re-enactment there appear three *personae*: Stephen Dedalus, in whose attitude and language the genuine Christine is subsumed; Malachi Mulligan, né Oliver *St. John* Gogarty, who takes on the role and performs the action of the original St. John the Baptist; and Haines.

In this light, many of Malachi's gestures acquire a new significance. Like St. John, he is the announcer, the messenger, in Hebrew — a *malach*. He is at once the last echo of the Old Testament and the first cry of the New. When he sweeps his mirror a half circle in the air, *it is to flash tidings abroad in sunlight now radiant on the sea* (page 8). It is he who permits himself to say to Stephen, in language most reminiscent: *And to think of your having to beg from these swine. I'm the only one who knows what you are* (9). On page 10, when he offers his characterization of Stephen, he defines that knowledge: *O, an impossible person.* And on page 12 the dialogue describes that relationship explicitly:

—Dedalus, come down, like a good mosey.
—I'm coming, Stephen said, turning.
—Do, for Jesus' sake, Buck Mulligan said. For my sake and for all our sakes.

Thus while the dialogue reads like a synoptic version of the Gospels, the relationship of the New Testament to the Old — "like a good mosey" — is not forgotten.

The life of St. John, moreover, affords additional parallels. The meal that is eaten in the tower includes honey: *And his meat was locusts and wild honey.* (St. Matthew 3:4.) Like John, Malachi wears a girdle about his loins; like John he is arrayed in garments of a hairy texture: for the Baptist's camel hair, his own *lovely pair with a hair stripe* (8). The gift of a pair of shoes to Stephen is also designed to echo Holy Writ: *But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. (Ibid.)*

The final scene, of course, discovers Malachi Mulligan in an actual act of baptism. And the last word of the chapter marks him, as in the

Gospel according to St. John, "usurper": *He was not that Light, but he was sent to bear witness of that Light.* (St. John 1:8.)

Stephen's adversary, however, is not Mulligan: it is Haines. Since Stephen is, at second remove, Love, it is not surprising that he should be opposed by one whose name is an Anglicization of the French word for "hate." Joyce plays fair with his reader; he warns him of the connection: says the old woman to Haines, *Is it French you are talking, sir?* (16). Haines, then, is Hatred as opposed to Love; Haines is Satan. Moreover, Haines brought along to the tower by Mulligan is again in fulfilment of scripture: *For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.* (St. Matthew 11:18).

What we find *sub rosa* in this chapter, therefore, is, among other things, a dialogue between Christ and Satan, a re-enactment of the Temptation. On the very second page, Mulligan's reply to Stephen, *Yes, my love,* is now seen to be not an epithet but an appellation. The next sentence, in antonymal sequence, moves from *my love* to Haines. Of Satan *alias* Haines it is stated that, *He can't make you* [Stephen] *out.* 'Twas ever so. Haines, moreover, is of the opinion that Stephen is "not a gentleman"; it is obvious that Haines is very conscious of Sir John Suckling's compliment to the prince of darkness. Of Haines Stephen says: *There's nothing wrong with him except at night* — an ancient opinion of the devil. When Mulligan swears, he invokes the name of God; not so Haines: *By Jove, it is tea, Haines said* (14).

And Haines wakes up raving and moaning after having dreamt of a black panther. "One summer night," writes Dr. Gogarty in *Mourning becomes Mrs. Spendlove,* "when it was too hot to sleep although the door was open, shortly after midnight Trench, who had been dozing, awoke suddenly and screamed, 'The black panther!' He produced a revolver and fired two or three shots in the direction of the grate." This well may have been; but Joyce, in making *Haines* dream the dream, aimed at more than mere reportage. The black panther, as the old bestiaries have it, is a symbol of Christ.[1] In his dream to Satan Christ comes as nightmare. Stephen, then, is Love. Stephen's

---

1

Panter is an wilde der,
Is none fairer on werlde her;
He is blac so born of qual.
. . . . . .
In his hole sithen stille
Thre dages he slepen wille
Than after the thridde dai
He riseth and remeth lude so he mai
Ut of his throte cumeth a smel
Mid his rem forth over al

mother, little knowing, *laughed with others when old Royce sang*:

I am the boy
That can enjoy
Invisibility.

Stephen's brooding upon *Love's bitter mystery* (11) is thus an act of introspection, and his abstruse proofs syllogisms of self-justification:

Pooh! Buck Mulligan said. He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father. What? Haines said, beginning to point at Stephen. He himself?

Under an earlier aspect Stephen is Kinch, "toothless" Kinch, as in *kinchincove,* that is to say, the Babe, the Bambino. There is a moment, however, when he belies his identification: he asks, *Would I make money by it?* (17). It is a question which issues more properly from the mouth of the Adversary than from that of Stephen. Mulligan's comment put things straight again: *You put your hoof in it now, says Mulligan. What did you say that for?* (18).

The actual Temptation takes place on pages 21 and 22. It is prepared for by the series of innuendoes already referred to and by allusions to the forty-foot hole: *And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan: and was with the wild beasts.* (St. Mark 1:13)

On page 19 Stephen tells Haines that he pays rent for the tower *twelve quid to the secretary of state for war* — (unto Caesar — Caesar's), and two pages later there follow the things which are God's. Out of the very text the colloquy between Satan and his intended victim may thus be rendered.

SATAN: (After the recitation of Mulligan's sacrilegious verse) *We oughtn't to laugh, I suppose. He's rather blasphemous. I'm not a believer myself, that is to say. Still his gaiety takes the*

That overcometh haliweie.

. . . . . .

The dragunes one ne stiren nout
Wiles te panter rameth ogt,
Oc daren stille in here pit
Als so he weren of dethe offrigt.

SIGNIFICACIO

Crist is tokened thurg this der
Wos kinde we have told gu her.
For he is faier over alle men
So evensterre over erthe fen.

harm out of it somehow, doesn't it? . . . You're not a believer, are you? I mean, a believer in the narrow sense of the word. Creation from nothing and miracles and a personal God.

STEPHEN: *There's only one sense of the word, it seems to me.*

SATAN: (Offering Stephen some fire from a tinderbox — for Stephen's cigarette) *Yes, of course. Either you believe or you don't, isn't it? Personally I couldn't stomach that idea of a personal God. You don't stand for that, I suppose?*

STEPHEN: *You behold in me a horrible example of free thought.*

The answer, as tradition required, was ambiguous. Free thought was confessed but was declared horrible. Despite his insinuating understatements, his "rathers" and his "somehows," his feigned concession, his willingness, nay eagerness, to meet his interlocutor halfway, Satan is no further advanced than when he began his seduction. *Stephen walks on* (21). *Satanas retro!* For Stephen knows with whom he is dealing; as he makes ready to go he looks back at the smiling Haines, and remembers an Irish proverb: *Horns of a bull, hoof of a horse, smile of a Saxon.* Thus is the devil, horn and hoof, revealed an Englishman.

All the accounts of the Temptation (Matthew 4:1-10; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) are followed by descriptions of Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee where he beholds two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea. He asks them to follow him, for he will make them fishers of men. In *Telemachus* these fishers of men are to be found standing at the verge of the cliff, waiting for the man that was drowned (23).

Nor is the Temptation and its aftermath the sole event in the life of Christ which is interlinearly parallelled. Christ purging the temple of moneychangers is also recalled, and this by means of the debagging scene which is conjured up on page 9. If Haines makes any noise, Malachi promises, he'll bring down Seymour and they'll give him a ragging worse than they gave Clive Kempthorpe. Seymour, it must be asserted in the light of concordant evidence, is but another name for Christ, being, as some say it is, an Englishing of St. Amour, via St. Maur. Kempthorpe, though a name somewhat more cryptic, surrenders its meaning to etymology: *the hamlet of the beards* (thorpe — hamlet; kemp — a knot in wool, from the Norse word for beard), that is, Jerusalem. Kempthorpe's first name, Clive, is equally appropriate, — from the root "to cleave" meaning "to separate," even as Pharisee is from the Hebrew root *paroish* meaning the same thing.

In the gospel according to St. John (2:13-15) the scene is described as follows:

And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

And when he had made a scourge of small cords he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen; and passed out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.

In *Telemachus* it is thus transposed to Oxford, and imagined:

Young shouts of moneyed voices in Clive Kempthorpe's rooms. Palefaces: they hold their ribs with laughter, one clasping another. O, I shall expire! Break the news to her gently, Aubrey. I shall die! With slit ribbons of his shirt whipping the air he hops and hobbles round the table, with trousers down at heels, chased by Ades of Magdalen with the tailor's shears. A scared calf's face gilded with marmalade. I don't want to be debagged. Don't you play the giddy ox with me!

It is all there, hell let loose through Ades of the nine devils (Ades of Magdalen — another communicative *hapax legomenon*), the premonition of the end *(O, I shall expire!)*, the table, the scourge, the oxen, the moneychangers and their Golden Calf (*gilded with marmalade*).

Also recalled is Mother Eve, for whose sin Christ came to atone, recalled in the shape of the milkwoman who, upon another level of interpretation, is the personification of Ireland, Poor Old Woman, and on yet a third level, *la vieille* about whom more will be said later. Mother Eve, she enters *from a morning world,* and imitating the clichés of that morning world *she praises the goodness of the milk* (*And he saw that it was good* [Gen. 1]). Eden becomes *a lush field*, and the woman whence came our woe a *wandering crone, lowly form of an immortal serving her conquerer and her gay betrayer.* She is *of man's flesh made not in God's likeness, the serpent's prey* (16).

The chapter ends with the Revelation of St. John the Divine. *Seymour* [read *Christ*] *is back in town* (23), according to the announcement of the young man grasping a spur of rock (*petros*). He has *chucked medicine* (given up miraculous cures) *and gone in for the army* (the church militant). Mulligan, a Protestant, is then prompted to recall the Babylonian Woman and he mentions the red Carlisle girl, Lily. Lily's original is in Revelations (17:4): *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.* This explains both the remark about *going over next week to stew* (23) and the reference to *red-headed*

women who buck like goats (24). *Spooning with him on the pier* (23) — that is to equate *the waters where the whore sitteth* (*Ibid.,* 17:15).

The theological content of *Telemachus,* it is thus shown, is made up of more than merely aspersed religious reference. It has evangelical coherence. Coherence of narrative, however, though superior to the random techniques the commentators originally supposed, is not a consummation with which Joyce, one imagines, would content himself. Coherence is not pattern, but only an element in it. Pattern still remains to seek. Considering the christological background already sketched and noting certain clues in some places offered with a give-away explicitness — *Introibo ad altare Dei . . .* (5). *In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* (14) — it will not now come as a startling surprise if it is suggested that the basic structure of this chapter is that of the Ordinary and the Proper of the Mass.

The Mass

It must be stated forthwith that it is no pious rite which is celebrated here; out of the parodies which the irreverent Malachi Mulligan perpetrates it is not the Blessed but the Black Mass which emerges. Mulligan, in the five required sacerdotal vestments arrayed, is dressed for his function: his *dressinggown, ungirdled* (5), is alb and cincture; his *primrose waistcoat* (19) — chasuble with Y orphrey; the amice, covering neck and shoulder, and having two long strings, is represented by *stiff collar and rebellious necktie* (18), subsequently described as *rippling over his shoulder* (23); the towel carried over his forearm is, of course, the maniple; it is finally converted into the remaining vestment, when, on page 19, he slings it *stolewise* round his neck.

The Buck, moreover, bears an epithet suitable to his role, a reminiscence of the greatest buck of them all, the Irish "Buck" Whalley,[2] of whom it was whispered that he had acted as priest at a Black Mass. Mulligan's intention is not kept secret; again and again he makes pointed allusion to "the mockery of it."

Throughout the chapter the Mass is not only exemplified: its order is observed with precision and in sequence, as the parallel columns which follow will illustrate.

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[2] Of him it is reported that he once made a bet to walk to Jerusalem — to play ball against its walls. He made it. It is also reported that on another occasion "Jerusalem" Whalley and his friend Col. St. John Leger set fire to the apartment in which they were besotting themselves so as to see how long they could stand, here on earth, the fires which for eternity awaited them. With University College, which Joyce attended, "Buck" Whalley's name is associated as one of its earliest owners and residents.

Part of the Mass. Its characteristics:	Its correspondence:
1. *Preparatory prayer at the foot of the altar.* The beginning of the Mass, it is preceded by the sign of the cross. The priest begins the Antiphon: *Introibo ad altare Dei* and is antiphonally answered by the Server.	The sign of the cross is seen in the position of the razor and mirror. The introit is explicitly uttered. Malachi gives a long low whistle of call and two strong shrill whistles answer (antiphonally) through the calm (5).
2. Psalm 42 (*Judica me*) is recited by the Priest alternating with the Server. It is a psalm which prays God to judge and distinguish the petitioner's cause from the nation that is not holy (*de gente non sancta*) and asks deliverance from the unjust and deceitful man. It says also: *They have conducted me and brought me unto thy holy mount . . . Why art thou sad, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?*	The nation that is not holy is for reasons indicated in the text, the *English, bursting with money and indigestion* (6). The holy mount and tabernacle is the Martello Tower. Disquieting is effected by Haines, raving and moaning.
3. *The Public Confession* (*Confiteor Deo*). This is an acknowledgment of guilt before God, a confession to the blessed Mary, the Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints. The priest prays God that He forgive and grant absolution, "turn again and quicken us."	Malachi invites Stephen to *Look at yourself* (8). Stephen recalls his failure to kneel down when his dying mother asked him. The Virgin is adumbrated in *Our mighty mother* (7); John the Baptist is present; Sir Peter Teazle is there for a reason; and the saints follow in the train of St. Ursula, who led 11,000 of them. Remission and absolution are equated by *It simply doesn't matter . . . Look at the sea. What does it care about offences?* *And no more turn aside and brood* echoes the priest's verse.
4. The priest ascends the altar and says: *Aufer a nobis, quaesumus Domine, iniquitates nostras: Take away from us our iniquities, we beseech thee.* He refers to the saints *whose relics are here.*	*No, mother, let me be, let me live. Her secrets: old feather fans, tasseled dancecards,* etc. (11).

5. *The Introit.* This is a part which varies from feast to feast. It is assumed, for reasons already suggested and further proof to be adduced, that these variable parts are from the Mass for the Feast of Corpus Christi. Its introit is from Psalm 80:7: *He fed them with the fat of wheat, and filled them with honey out of the rock.* The priest enters the sanctuary to begin the Mass.

Breakfast is ready (12). It will be remembered this breakfast consisted in part of bread and honey.

Kinch, ahoy! . . . Buck Mulligan's voice sang from within the tower (12).

6. *The Kyrie Eleison* (Lord, have mercy). A series of invocations addressed to each of the Three Divine Persons.

This is phonetically reproduced, the *kyrie eleison* being transformed *coronation* and thrice repeated, thus:

On coronation
Coronation day?
O won't we have a merry time
On coronation day (12).

7. *The Gloria in excelsis* (Glory to God in the highest), the Angelic Hymn. In the cathedral at Lucca flames are kindled at the intonation of the *Gloria* whenever the archbishop pontificates.

In the gloomy domed livingroom of the tower (13).

Two shafts of soft daylight fell across the flagged floor (13).

8. *The Collect,* a short prayer said before the Epistle and having direct reference to the feast of the day. The Collect of the Feast of Corpus Christi speaks of the memorial of the Passion. Its last words are *Who livest.*

The resurrection of Christ on the third day is obliquely envisaged: *We'll be choked . . . Open that door . . . The key scraped round harshly twice and, when the heavy door had been set ajar, welcome light and bright air entered. Stephen haled his upended valise to the table* (13).

9. *The Epistle.* That for the Feast of Corpus Christi is from I Corinthians, 11:23-29: *Took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said, Take ye, and eat.*

Bread, butter, honey . . . Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts (13).

10. *The Gradual.* The fourth variable part of the Mass. It contains the prayer *Munda cor meum ac labia mea,* cleanse my heart and lips. It contains the alleluatic verse (*Alleluia:* praise God).

But hush, not a word more on the subject (13).

For the Feast of Corpus Christi, Psalm 144:15-16, recited: *Thou openest thy hand and fillest every living creature with thy blessing.* The priest intones: *In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*

The tea, sugar, eggs, fish, milk, lemon (14).

The Gradual of Corpus Christi is followed by a sequence.

Four lines of text and ten pages of notes (14).

11. *The Gospel.* This is the most solemn of the readings at the Mass because it tells a story of Christ whose words and deeds it recalls. On Corpus Christi Day it is from St. John 6:50-51. At High Mass the Gospel is sung. It concludes: *Gloria tibi, Domine.*

This is most blasphemously rendered on page 15.

Glory be to God (15).

12. *The Credo.* The profession of faith drawn up in the General Council of Nice in 325 and Constantinople in 381, it asserts, among other doctrines, one God, and belief in Christ who 'for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven,' a faith in the Second Coming, and loyalty to the one holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The islanders speak frequently of God (15).

In the description of the milkwoman, Mother Eve recalled.

The milkwoman listens only to Buck Mulligan.

13. *The offertory verse.* This is a prayer of self-surrender and oblation; at this point bread and candles were once offered; the practise was discontinued at about the eleventh century; to a certain extent the collection has taken the place of candle and bread.

Heart of my heart, were it more More would be laid at your feet (17). This is from a poem of Swinburne's called *The Oblation.*

The milkwoman collects her money.

14. *The Offering of the Bread and Wine.* The paten with the host is taken, and offering it up, the priest says: *Accept, O holy Father, this unspotted host . . . which I offer for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences.*

Yet here's a spot(17).

Agenbite of inwit. Conscience(17).

15. *The Incensing of the Offerings.* The incense is blessed. The priest prays: *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips.*

I blow him out about you (18).

Stephen is reluctant to expatiate on Hamlet(17, 18).

16. *The Washing of the Hands.* The priest washes his fingers, reciting Psalm XXV, 6-12. *I will wash my hands . . . and I will compass thine altar . . . The wicked . . . whose right hand is filled with gifts.*

They wash and tub and scrub(17).

Would I make money by it? (17).

17. *The Prayer to the Most Holy Trinity.*

From her or from him?
From me(18).

18. *The Orate Fratres.* The priest, calling the congregation to prayer with him, says audibly: *Orate, fratres.* Brethren, pray.

Why don't you play them as I do? (18).

19. *The Secrets.* Said inaudibly, it ends with an ekphonesis. In it the priest recommends the offering just made.

He emptied his pockets on the table. There . . . And there's your Latin quarter hat(18).

20. *The Preface* (a prayer of thanksgiving). That for Corpus Christi and its Octave acknowledged *God in visible form so that we may through Him be drawn to things invisible.*
As the priest introduces the Preface, he holds both hands over the altar, then joins them before his breast, and finally, until he says the *Sanctus,* disjoins them.

Do I contradict myself? Very well, then, I contradict myself(18).

His hands plunged and rummaged (18).

21. *The Sanctus,* the triumphal hymn of the angels, which announces: *Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!*

And going forth he met Butterly[3] (18).

22. *The Prayers before the Consecration.* These invoke the Saints and implore their protection.

(St.) *Thomas Aquinas and his fifty-five reasons* (19).

23. *Oblation of the Victim to God.* The priest signs thrice the oblation with the Sign of the Cross. There follow (a.) The Consecration of the Host, (b.) The consecration of the Wine, (c.) The oblation of the Victim to God.	*You couldn't do it under three pints* (19). *He proves . . . that grandson . . . is grandfather, and that he himself is the ghost of his own father. What? . . . He himself?* (19). *The sacred pint alone can unbind the tongue of Dedalus*(20). *The Father and the Son idea. The Son striving to be atoned with the Father*(20) (atoned — at-oned).
24. *Prayers after Consecration.* The priest offers the Body and Blood of Christ for the comfort of the souls in purgatory.	This is sacrilegiously rendered through the verses on pp. 20-21.
25. *The Pater Noster.* The Lord's Prayer. *Our Father who art in heaven . . . forgive us our trespasses. . . . our daily bread.*	*The idea of a personal God*(21). *You don't stand for that*(21). *Now I eat his salt bread*(21).
26. *The Libera Nos,* prayer beseeching liberation from all evils, past, present, and to come.	*Able to free yourself*(22) from the Italian and British master.
27. The priest puts the Particle into the Chalice.	*Haines detached . . . some fibres* (22).
28. *The Agnus Dei: Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*	*It seems history is to blame*(22).
29. *The Prayers for Holy Communion.* These are prayers for peace, for sanctification, and for grace. They ask that the church be granted unity.	The entire paragraph beginning: *The proud potent titles . . .* (22).
30. *The Prayers at the Communion.* Communion of the Body and the Blood.	*The man that was drowned*(23). *A swollen bundle . . . Here I am*(23).
31. *Prayers during the Ablution.* The priest prays that "the temporal gift may become to us an eternal remedy."	*Snapshot. Brief exposure*(23).

[3] Dr. Gogarty refers thus to Butterly: "'Going forth I met Butterly, a spruce little barrister . . . who always seemed to be leaving in a hurry, though no one knew where he went or where he slept. He was now leaving the scene of one of his famous jokes." *As I was Going Down Sackville Street, p.* 65.

32. *The Communion Verse: Dominus vobiscum.*	*Ah, go to God*(23).
33. *The Post Communion Verse.* That for Corpus Christi requests God that "He make us to be filled with the eternal enjoyment of His Divinity."	*I'm the Uebermensch* (24).
34. *The Dismissal: Ite, missa est.*	*I'm going, Mulligan, he said*(24).
35. *The Blessing.* The priest makes a profound reverence. He turns to the faithful invoking upon them the blessing of God.	*His plump body plunged*(24). *Turning the curve, he waved his hand* (24).
36. *The Last Gospel.* The beginning of the Gospel of St. John, which reads in part: *There was a man sent from God whose name was John . . . He was not the Light but he was to testify concerning the Light.*	*Usurper*(24).

One can but recall, as one goes through this progress of subterranean reference, the remark of Arthur Symons, one of Joyce's early friends, concerning the Black Masses that are "even now performed from time to time in a secrecy which is all but absolute."[4] At the same time one must be amused, too, by Thomas Merton's assertion[5] that it was Joyce's *Ulysses* which was one of the influences which brought him into the bosom of the Church. Certainly it is in most mysterious ways that God His wonders works.

The Witches' Sabbath

It is as a part of the Witches' Sabbath[6] that the Black Mass finds its properly improper performance. The correlation was by Joyce not ignored. *Telemachus* is, clandestinely and all, such a Witches' Sabbath. Haines, it is now realized, is not simply a devil, content of St. John; he is the Devil. In Ireland he is, according to Lactantius, upon his rightful estate. Said that author: "The Lord so divided the world with the devil that *occidens, septentrio, tenebrae, frigus* — the West [*West-*

[4] In *Figures of Several Centuries.*
[5] In *The Seven Storey Mountain.*
[6] It is not performed on the Sabbath, nor is it in any way related to the Day of Rest. The word is said to be derived from French *s'esbattre,* to frolic.

meath (13)], the North [*I'm hyperborean as much as you* (7)], the Dark [*the awaking mountains* (5)], and the Cold [*the cold gaze* (22)], fell to the sphere of the Adversary." In Dublin he is in his very capital; something, says Burns, "is just as true as the deil's in hell, Or Dublin City." The exact terrain of conflict is located between Kingstown (Christ's?) and Bray Head (the notorious vicar's?). Because of the unholy presence there proliferate throughout the chapter a herd of *beastly's, damn's,* and a *deuce* or two.

Other diabolic paraphernalia are also indicated. The aunt is "to fork out" twenty quid; hoofs are barely concealed. It is not without significance that at his first approach to Haines, Mulligan is all but choked (13).

As in the Witches' Sabbath the first discovery of the Devil finds him already enthroned:[7] A *tall figure* [Haines's] *rose from the hammock where it had been sitting* (13). The introduction of the old woman is prescribed procedure; she is *la vieille* (when the devil can do nothing, says the proverb, he sends an old woman); she is the heroine of the Sabbath and is expressly so described: *a witch on her toadstool* (15). Nor are her usual adjuncts forgotten: her broomstick flashes from the peculiar phrase about the Carlisle girl being "up the pole" (23), and the necessary frog is shadowed forth in the young man moving *slowly frogwise his green legs* (23). Satan's mascot, the goat, is with a special appropriateness introduced into a chapter whose colour is given as gold-white; for it was traditionally the goat whose head was sculptured as a sign of forced servitude in the gold and ivory of the pastoral crozier.

The hidden ceremonial in *Telemachus* runs true to form. The manner in which the Mass is imitated only to be distorted has already been charted. It is pertinent to note that faithful (after their fashion) as are the echoes of the Mass, no sacring bell is ever heard; since bells drive away evil spirits Witches' Sabbaths shunned them. It will also have been noted that by the time Haines comes upon the scene, Mulligan's razor has gone out of sight; this is, among other reasons, because the devil is reputed to have an antipathy towards knives, an antipathy which gives deeper meaning to Mulligan's comment upon the relations between Haines and Stephen: *He* [Haines] *can't make you out. O, my name for you is the best: Kinch, the knifeblade* (6). A similar aversion the Destroyer entertains towards salt; he hates it, a preservative;

[7] For relevant information on the devil and his orgies, see *The Devil,* by Maurice Garcon and Jean Vinchon; and *The Devil in Legend and Literature,* by Maximilian Rudwin. There is also — to stir the mind to wonder anew about Joyce's choice of the name Seymour — *Irish Demonology and Witchcraft,* by St. John Seymour (N.Y.,1913).

he leaves it for Stephen to consume: *Now I eat his salt bread* (23).[8]

One of the most important rites of the Witches' Sabbath is its orgiastic dance which reaches so great a pitch of intensity that often it culminates in actual levitation and flight. The part is given to Mulligan: *running forward to a brow of the cliff* [he] *fluttered his hands at his sides like fins or wings of one about to rise in the air . . . He capered before them . . .* (20). Joyce, however, refrains from equating the gesture most revolting of the Witches' Sabbath, — the *osculatio ad anum diaboli;* as Mulligan, in language which preludes the action of page 719, keeps on making remarks about "scutter" and "noserags" and having *Haines up the nose . . . against him* (9), this rite is suggested and, of course, repudiated.

The *Circe* chapter, as is well known, presents in large measure a transmogrification of the principal events of Bloom's day. Here, in Nighttown, all that has been hitherto restrained and inhibited is at last released; what during the day was implicit is now at midnight made explicit. From this treatment, *Telemachus* is not excepted. Page 583 discovers Father Malachi O'Flynn (the Father O'Flynn of the ballad "who makes hares of them all"), in a long petticoat and reversed chasuble, his two left feet back to the front, celebrating camp mass. He is in the company of the Reverend Mr. Hugh C. Love, who apparently in the course of the day has acquired a middle name: Haines. Father Malachi O'Flynn intones: *Introibo ad altare diaboli;* the Reverend Mr. Haines Love responds: *To the devil which hath made glad my young days;* and on the following page the Voice of all the Damned articulates the word God backwards.

Mulligan's address to Stephen, *Ah, poor dogsbody* (7) is at last explained.

Assuming as premise the situation revealed in the foregoing pages, one may now approach and, it is submitted, at last solve, a problem which has agitated the minds of Joyce scholars ever since *Ulysses* was first published: Why did Joyce, out of all the days of the calendar, choose precisely the sixteenth of June as his all-inclusive echoing microcosmic Day?

It is clear that uppermost in Joyce's thought, though nethermost in his utterance, was the equation between Stephen and Christ. That equation, indeed, he transcribes on page 674 in what was for Joyce speech unambiguous:

[8] The whole phrase, of course, is an echo of Dante's *Purgatorio,* Canto XVII: *How salt the savor is of others' bread.*

What were Stephen's and Bloom's quasisimultaneous volitional quasisensations of concealed identities?

Visually, Stephen's: The traditional figure of hypostasis, depicted by Johannes Damascenus, Lentulus Romanus and Epiphanius Monachus as leucodermic, sesquipedalian with winedark hair.[9]

Auditively, Bloom's: The traditional accent of the ecstasy of catastrophe.

Ulysses was in a sense intended, therefore, as the body of Christ, rendered literature. As late as his fiftieth birthday Joyce is still heard dropping hints — unheeded — as to the nature of his work. Reports Mr. Eugene Jolas, in *My Friend James Joyce*: "On that occasion we gave a small dinner at our home in Paris attended by Mrs. Joyce, Thomas McGreevy, Samuel Beckett, Lucy and Paul Léon, Helen and Giorgio Joyce, and others. The birthday cake was decorated with an ingenious candy replica of a copy of *Ulysses,* in its blue jacket. Called on to cut the cake, Joyce looked at it a moment and said: *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes: Hoc est enim corpus meum.*"

This being so, the day that Joyce should have chosen was that of the Feast of Corpus Christi; in 1904 it fell on Thursday, the second of June. But Joyce, because he had in him the Jesuit strain, *only injected the wrong way* (10), desired also to fulfil his secondary intention — a Witches' Sabbath. This perverse desire may have suggested itself to him out of a contemplation of the data of his own biography. "The main reunion of the witches," writes Mr. Rudwin, "occurred on May Eve (April 30) which was sometimes known as Toodmas in Great Britain and as Walpurgis Night in Germany, and on November Eve (October 31) called Hallowe'en. As a later addition, midway between the nights of power, we have witches' gatherings on Candlemas (February second)." February second was Joyce's birthday.

Now Witches' Sabbaths cannot be perpetrated on Feasts of Obligation; this is a rule which even the Devil observes. It is traditional, too, that they take place on a Thursday. "It seemed," pontificate Messieurs Garcon and Vinchon, "that Sunday, the day of holy congregation and of prayer, which recalls the creation of the world and the resurrection of the Saviour, must necessarily be respected by the Devil; and similarly, Friday, the day of the Passion . . . The Turks, says one author, celebrate Friday, the Jews Saturday, the Christians Sunday. The Devil has set himself in front of them all, and has taken Thursday in order to have the first celebration."

The Feast of Corpus Christi, though invariably a Thursday, was

[9] The reference is to a literary picture of Christ, by some attributed to Johannes Damascenus, by others to a fictitious character, Publius Lentulus by name.

therefore, as has been indicated, unsuitable for Joyce's complete purpose; it served only as his point of departure. It is true that he has used its Proper of the Mass, but in that he by no means contravened prescribed form, for the devil's tabu is against the day, not its liturgy. The most proximate Thursday, thereafter — the ninth of June — was also impossible; it belonged to the *Octave* of Corpus Christi. The earliest next opportunity was the Thursday following — that is to say, the sixteenth of June.

K. P. A. TAYLOR:

The Calendar

For it is cold in the long train, and in the narrow car
rumorous in the night through Jugoslavia,
with you beside me in the long bed, narrow
and trembling too, and nearby the window,
your back to the window, and my back
curved in the vigil of a shaken tree.

See the long knife enter the car side and pierce
sharp O sharp and deep O pain in your pudes.
Closer, come closer, beloved, to my side,
bend and extend your predilectable body
farther O farther from the window.

From the line of the window now, the level,
see, resolving the window, the tops of roofs illuminated
dully, and sometime under and beneath us
the rooftops lighted and illumined in dull snow.

. . . not apathy drive the great horse with great hooves,
the blond percheron with guilt harness
and the long wagon.
Let us drive in faith in the brandishing wagon
and call with meaning on a family of unfamiliars.

Begin with the African Augustine.

WALLACE STEVENS:

The Sick Man

Bands of black men seem to be drifting in the air,
In the South, bands of thousands of black men,
Playing mouth-organs in the night or, now, guitars.

Here in the North, late, late, there are voices of men,
Voices in chorus, singing without words, remote and deep,
Drifting choirs, long movements and turnings of sounds.

And in a bed in one room, alone, a listener
Waits for the unison of the music of the drifting bands
And the dissolving chorals, waits for it and imagines

The words of winter in which these two will come together,
In the ceiling of the distant room, in which he lies,
The listener, listening to the shadows, seeing them,

Choosing out of himself, out of everything within him,
Speech for the quiet, good hail of himself, good hail, good hail,
The peaceful, blissful words, well-tuned, well-sung, well-spoken.

HOWARD O. SACKLER:

Shem's Voyage to Ararat

Sodden is the boatfloor and it tilts with the sea,
Tilts; shifts the scuffling of the snorting, paired animals—
A scrambling clatter: paw-foot-claw scratches
At the deck, veering. Here I smell the coupled beasts,
The sour musk of tangled flank and fur
Thickening the smells of rain-pommeled straw.

The clustering forms of my brothers are dim,
Huddled, paired damply at the prow in the drizzle;
I can see the eyes glinting from the cluster
In each ivory thrust of lightning over the prow,
Puckered in a seaward stare.

The tale is told to me thus:
All creeping evil that sang or lowed or crowed or chirped
Has coyly gurgled at the last
And stirs in loose suspended dance,
Stirs with the whims of the depths of the sea.
Thus the tale is told to me
These twoscore nights.

But the boat is dank and the air
Is pungent and sour with fur-musk,
The puckered eyes are lifeless in the lightning.

And the mud shall be studded
With all the drowned evils
When the crowded waters dwindle
To relinquish the ark.

Lord O Lord of the ivory lightning,
Why is it I
That thou hast forsaken
To the paired beasts' clatter
Of paw-foot-claw
On the rain-sodden deck?

The Ways of Saint and Sepulchre

She koude muchel of wandrynge by the wey.—Chaucer

Draw comfort from yon medal of St. Christopher
Lashed to her clavicle with meager chain:
His feet waver, wading
Where the bone is thin,
Through the small brass waves that attend her skin
With more constancy than our disdain.

The burdened passage of St. Christopher
Is quite obscured
By the flash and glare
Of her late-baroque dental work
And the trinkets, screwed to her hair,
But the scene shall be assured
When detection runs berserk
From our traveled eyes—
Ah! her spongy head has sneezed
And the emblem is . . . eclipsed by the doubtful chemise.

The sepulchre shall move among
The unmoved pilgrims;
Still, take solace in the dangling of the hidden saint
Who abides as both patron and burden to us,
Who makes passage with those
Wearing soiled underclothes
In which he wobbles, lightly strung
On dainty necklaces, inconspicuous.

And the Policeman is our Friend

The oblate policeman winnows the air,
Thong entwined with the guiding glove:
A lictor for his rented bier
That will have hiccups, hired, above.

A spider thrives upon his large face
And sinks the cobwebs around his eyes
And scars the face with silkthread steps
Of many years. It will not rise

Within the florist-freighted rosewood,
Nor will the policeman, winnower of air.
He marches before his motor-drawn hearse
Of which he knows not, but is aware.

He has heard the active shovels in his earth
And a clearing of throats behind the bouquets:
He listens as he plods to condolences
That shall be coughed in several ways.

WARREN CARRIER:

Meaning in the Poetry of Lorca

Technique

Lorca said of Góngora's poetry: "The narrative is like the skeleton of the poem enveloped in the magnificent flesh of his images. Each moment has identical intensity and plastic value, and the story has no importance whatever, but it gives, with its invisible thread, unity to the poem."

The technique is that of Lorca himself in the *Romancero Gitano*. When later (1936) these remarks on Góngora were republished, a note appended, presumably at Lorca's direction, stated that these ideas did not correspond to the author's present views. But in 1928 they certainly did correspond with Lorca's views (on Góngora); and they corresponded with his poetic technique. The ballads of the *Romancero Gitano* (and many other poems previous and subsequent), while not long lyric poems after the manner of Góngora, are anecdotes fleshed with metaphor.

Themes

The Spaniard, as Madariaga has said, is a man of honor, violence and death. And these are the themes — how could they not be? — of Spanish literature, and they are things Lorca sees with such terrible lucidity, and they form the substance and meaning of his poetry. Lorca is, for the foreigner especially, the greatest modern Spanish poet precisely because he shows us these terrible things about Spain with his terrible clarity. And about death.

Honor, for the Spaniard, is related to the cult of the virgin, to chastity, purity. In Lorca's poetry the theme of honor deals with unconsummated love or marriage, with the conflict between primitive innocence and "civilized" society. But the result of the conflict between innocence and "civilization" is death, the result of unconsummated love or marriage is death. Death thus consumes his other themes. As it has consumed the poet. Death is omnipresent in its horror, its anonymity, its finality. In his early poetry death is a single-minded, implacable consciousness; in *The Poet in New York* death becomes all

that falsely believed by an uninnocent, unprimitive society. The various qualities of death are searched out and savoured. And they are given to us in a bitter evocation of emotion. And the emotion becomes the fact.

Lorca has written one of the greatest poems about death ever written in Spanish, *The Elegy for Ignacio Sanchez Mejías.* In it are all the themes of death. In the first great Spanish elegy, *Coplas a la muerte de su padre,* by old Jorge Manrique, the traditional image was used:

> . . . Our lives are rivers
> that go down to the sea
> which is death . . .

Lorca cries to Ignacio:

> Sleep, fly, rest: Even the sea dies!

To understand death in Lorca's poetry one need not read his greatest and most obscure poems. One may take a typical, relatively simple ballad and find in it the whole world of Lorca's meaning, the keys to his poetic kingdom. The theme of death, and the themes of passion and violence, honor and fate which lead to death. Take the poem "Brawl" (*Reyerta*) from the *Romancero Gitano*:

The Poem

(The following translation is literal and does not pretend to be an equivalent.)

Reyerta	*Brawl*
En la mitad del barranco	In the middle of the canyon
las navajas de Albacete,	knives of Albacete,
bellas de sangre contraria,	beautiful with enemy blood,
relucen como los peces.	flash like fishes.
Una dura luz de naipe	A hard light of card
recorta en el agrio verde	cuts in the bitter green
caballos enfurecidos	infuriated horses
y perfiles de jinetes.	and profiles of riders.
En la copa de un olivo	In the bower of an olive tree
lloran dos viejas mujeres.	weep two old women.
El toro de la reyerta	The bull of the brawl
se sube por las paredes.	climbs up the walls.
Angeles negros traían	Black angels were bringing
pañuelos y agua de nieve.	shawls and water of snow.
Angeles con grandes alas	Angels with great wings

de navajas de Albacete.
Juan Antonio el de Montilla
rueda muerto la pendiente,
su cuerpo lleno de lirios
y una granada en las sienes.
Ahora monta cruz de fuego,
carretera de la muerte.

*

El juez, con guardia civil,
por los olivares viene.
Sangre resbalada gime
muda canción de serpiente.
—Señores, guardias civiles:
aquí pasó lo de siempre.
Han muerto cuatro romanos
y cinco cartagineses.

*

La tarde loca de higueras
y de rumores calientes
cae desmayada en los muslos
heridos de los jinetes.
Y ángeles negros volaban
por el aire del poniente.
Angeles de largas trenzas
y corazones de aceite.

of knives of Albacete.
Juan Antonio, he of Montilla,
rolls dead down the slope,
his body full of lilies
and a pomegranate between his temples.
Now he mounts a cross of fire,
en route to death.

*

The judge, with the Civil Guard,
comes through the olive groves.
Slippery blood moans
a mute song of snake.
"Gentlemen of the Civil Guard:
here we have the same old story.
Here have died four Romans
and five Carthaginians."

*

The afternoon, mad with fig trees
and with hot rumors,
falls fainting on the wounded
thighs of the riders.
And black angels were flying
through the western sky.
Angels with long tresses
and hearts of oil.

The Narrative

The poem is about a brawl which takes place in a canyon and in which nine men are killed, including a certain Juan Antonio of Montilla. The Civil Guard approaches, the survivors flee.

Gloss and Interpretation

(1)

In the middle of the canyon
knives of Albacete
beautiful with enemy blood
flash like fishes.

Albacete is a town in southern Spain famous for knife-making. The knives are identified, named, for they are the protagonists; their wielders remain anonymous.

Beautiful is justified as (a) a visual image of the bright red color of the blood on the knife; as (b) an intellectual image since the purpose of the knife is to be wielded and draw blood, and here it is beautiful in

accomplishment; as (c) an emotional image since knives are wielded with great fury and gusto; as (d) a sexual image since the knives, in phallic form, have found their sheaths and bear the emblem of their success; or the knives, since they are given an independent importance in the poem, are themselves passionate for blood.

The knives *flash* as do fish in water, quickly, bright in the darker water about. The image is felicitous because it carries out the idea of the knives' independence; that is, as fish, the knives have their own life apart from whatever else may move them. This carries as well, therefore, the impression that the men who wield the knives cannot help themselves, are victims of the knives, or the purpose of the knives.

(2)

A hard light of card
cuts in the bitter green
infuriated horses
and profiles of riders.

Hard here may mean *sharp* or *cruel, sharp* with *card* as a light of one dimension, the edge of the card; one gets the impression of a card being dealt, in a flash of light, comparable to, and so perhaps a restatement of, the flash of the knives described above. Cards are used to tell fortunes (or make or break them), and in another poem of the *Romancero,* "The Ballad of the Man Who Had an Appointment with Death," there is a consulting of *frozen cards* in which the *frozen* indicates a predetermination, that is, destiny "fatally fixed"; and gypsies especially are known for their fortune telling and for their "fatalism," and thus translating *hard* as *cruel,* we might read *card* as *fate* or *fortune.*

Cuts furthers the quality of sharpness of the light and recalls the knives. The Spanish word *recorta* may also be translated *outlines* and *en* then would become *against;* and *bitter* is probably an affective word for *dark* in connection with *green,* and *green* surely means *verdure, grass, foliage,* the background of the canyon; the lines might read literally: "outlines against the dark green foliage of the canyon." But the scene is bitter and so *green* is *bitter;* and green is the color of life, but since death is present, life has turned bitter.

Horses, while an elemental part of the gypsy's world, also signify throughout Lorca's poetry the idea of liberty or a thing free, or freely passionate, or rebellious. *Infuriated* here might mean out of hand, maddened, or out of control; literally the line means that the horses

are out of control or rearing, but the horses carry not only their riders but their riders' passion; and the verse then would import that the riders have let their freedom (of will, action) get out of hand; the riders have been overcome by their passion.

Profiles continues the one dimension of the card; it also "catches" the riders, for a profile is a still-shot, or study; and there is a contrast between the furious horses in motion and their riders motionless, and yet the whole statement gives the impression of a still (or cut-out) picture, or of passion petrified in a frieze. A paraphrase of the statement might be: "Cruel fate has caught (and the poet has caught in his poem) in this dark valley these men overcome by passion."

(3)

In the bower of an olive tree
weep two old women.

This image is fairly traditional, even folkloric, and it is classical in the poetry of Lorca. (It perhaps has a basis in primitive animism; of course, poetry—and metaphor—is the poet's "pretended" animism.) Lorca has employed this image, for example, in his great poem "Lament for the Death of a Bull-fighter" to describe his own elegiac purpose. The two old women are the poet—Lorca as elegist; or they are the chorus, lamenting the tragedy which has occurred on the stage below.

Women because it is the mothers who weep, *old* because it is an old story that their sons and husbands are killed in brawls and feuds and that they are left to lament. (Lorca's play, *Bodas de Sangre,* has this as a central theme.) *Olive tree* evokes, in connection with the *cross* of line 21, the Mount of Olives of the Christian legend. It was here that Jesus went to pray that his "cup" (his coming death) be removed from him. The Spanish word *copa,* significantly, means both *cup* and *bower.* And it is meaningful that *two* women weep; in the Christ story, according to one version, at least, two women weep at the tomb, or one thinks of the two Marys. "Animistic" nature, the poet, the "chorus," the eternal mothers and wives and lovers, and Jesus, lament that death should be inevitable (because of the passion and sin of man). In my Christian reading of these two lines, however, I may be forcing what is implicit, or merely unconsciously suggested, beyond Lorca's conception; I am not at all certain that Lorca used *copa* ambiguously; but whether or not he meant to imply such a meaning, such a meaning is implied by the words.

(4)

The bull of the brawl
climbs up the walls.

Bull hints at obstinacy, singlemindedness (the English connotation of *bullheaded*), and great irresponsible blundering (English "bull in China shop"), and so *bull* taken by itself may be rendered as "blind and irresponsible destructiveness"; taken in context the bull symbolizes the infuriated passion of the fight, above imaged by the horses, and (with a difference) above, by the fishes. Passion is "out of control" for it climbs the walls; one can see a bull ring with the bull maddened (by the frustration of the passes, the pricks of the lances and banderillas, the noise and presence of the crowd — comparable to the taunts and insults of a brawl preliminary to the actual killing), lunging with his horns (*knives*), pursuing the torero, crashing over the protective walls; and the walls are reason, law, restraint, fearful conscience (that does make cowards of us all, if we ponder or receive not the active taunts and pricks). In a tertiary—and perhaps unaware—sense, the bull is a symbol of masculinity, and the walls or ring of the womb.

(5)

Black angels were bringing
shawls and water of snow.
Angels with great wings
of knives of Albacete.

Black angels are death personified in the riders who wield the knives of Albacete; the fact that they bring shawls (and later, in line 38, have *hearts of oil*) makes them the mourners as well, for they bring the typical gypsy funeral equipment: a shawl or blanket in which to wrap the body (and, in line 38, an oil lamp to place beside the body for the wake).

Snow water recalls, in a manner, the knives, for water wounds (see, for example, Lorca's "Casida for One Wounded by Water") and mirrors the knives in its cold thrust into the earth; and snow water comes from cold high places and such places are places of death in Lorca's poetry (for example, in the "Ballad of One Who Has an Appointment with Death": "He learns to cross his hands / and enjoy the cold air / of metals and peaks."); and death and snow water are associated elsewhere in his poetry as in the "Ballad of a July Day": "—She is dead in the water, / a child of snow . . . "; perhaps the most revealing early reference to the image is in the Canción Otoñal: "Will the snow melt

/ when death takes us?" Death has come to take, the snow has melted. The cold water will also soothe wounds and the handkerchief wipe them clean, as in the "Song of the Flogged Gypsy": "Civil Guard on your round / give me a sip of water. / Water with fishes and boats / Water water water water. / . . . There are not silk handkerchiefs enough / to wipe my face clean."

The *great wings* of the riders are made of knives; it is through a wielding of the knives (flapping wings) that they become angels of death; and above the knife-carriers death hovers.

(6)

Juan Antonio, he of Montilla,
rolls dead down the slope,
his body full of lilies
and a pomegranate between his temples.

The skeleton of the narrative shows in three, possibly four, places in simple concrete prose statements: in the immediately above lines 17 and 18, and in lines 23 and 24, 27 and 28, and possibly partially in the first four lines. It might be said, in another way, that Lorca, as a matter of technique, spices (or "spikes") a qualitative or ideographic development of the poem with occasional, and occasionally startling, narrative statements; or he intussuscepts the feminine metaphor with the stark straight prose of narrative; but often his seeming qualitative development is discovered to be, upon probing, in fact a narrative development, and is, at best, a metaphor-narrative development, as, for example, in lines 31-34: the bone richly ensleeved without excess of unattached image.

His body full of lilies might denote merely that the slope was covered with lilies and that Juan Antonio gathered them rolling down it; or the lilies might be the holes where the knives have entered, the lily itself appearing like a hole with a knife stuck in it; but lilies are commonly associated with funerals and so indubitably the meaning is that Juan Antonio is dead. But the lily also signifies purity, and therefore Juan Antonio is pure in death: he died a virgin, or he is purified by death. The black angels above who brought death also brought purification in the snow water; lily-white and snow-white blatantly betoken purity, virginity, sinlessness; snow water, or death in a Christian sense, has washed Juan Antonio clean of sin. In the most primitive acceptation as well as in terms of medieval religion death has meant purification. And this would be so for the gypsy.

The Spanish word *granada* has been mistranslated by several would-be translators of Lorca (Rolfe Humphries, for example) as *grenade*. If one understands the poem at all, such an error is inconceivable. In the poem knives have been issued as the weapons; the knife is the typical weapon of the gypsy; not even the Civil Guard would be likely to use grenades. *Granada* means *pomegranate,* here descriptive of a bloody head. Lorca has earlier described the pomegranate in a way that casts light on his use of the image here (much of his earlier poetry is, in fact, a dictionary — and is worth little more — by which one may read the later): "The pomegranate is the prehistory / Of the blood we carry, / The idea of blood, enclosed / In a hard and bitter globe / That has the vague form / Of heart and of head." (One thinks of Valéry's *Les Grenades* — the pomegranate a bloody head split by an excess of stuffing, as if by a discovery.) And the image traditionally refers to the Song of Solomon: "Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks."

(7)

Now he mounts a cross of fire,
en route to death.

The *cross of fire* is blood and, *en route to death,* it is "blood of holy heaven" in its way. Again Lorca adverts to Christian mythology, the crucifixion: Jean Antonio is a martyr, he has been betrayed by the man of this world to death; the *highway to death* (as the Spanish means literally) is the road to Calvary. It is a cross of *fire* because Juan Antonio has been betrayed by the fury or passion of his enemies. *Fire* here as well may mean that he is purified by fire (that is, by passion) as Christ achieved lustration through his crucifixion. (Perhaps the purifying fire has melted the snow water.) Juan Antonio is purified in the sense that he has died in the only way a gypsy should die: passionately, by his enemies' knives. Witness the two ballads concerning Antoñito el Camborio: in the first, "The Capture of Antoñito el Camborio on the Road to Seville," Antoñito has allowed himself to be captured by five Civil Guards; the poet addresses him: "Antonio, who are you? / If you call yourself a Camborio / you would have made a fountain / of blood with five jets. / You're not a son of anybody, / nor are you a Camborio." In the second ballad, "Death of Antoñito el Camborio," Antoñito has been stabbed by his four cousins; the poet cries to him: "Ay, Antoñito el Camborio, worthy of an empress!" (Note *five* Civil Guards, and *four* cousins.)

(8)

The judge, with the Civil Guard,
comes through the olive groves.

The Spanish Civil Guard in their colorful capes and tricorns function as a kind of National Guard to keep the highways free of bandits; they are employed by local *caciques* for nefarious ends; they dispense their "justice" summarily as a rule; they are the traditional enemies of the gypsies (for whom every highway is a highway of death); they are the traditional villains, everpresent, in Lorca's gypsy ballads. Lorca was murdered by the Civil Guard.

Persons are constantly coming and going through olive groves in Lorca's poetry: olive trees are a classical landscape in the *Romancero Gitano*. In the lines above, maintaining the Christian allusion (or coincidence), the olive groves recall again the Mount of Olives to which came the soldiers to take Jesus following his prayer that this "cup" be removed from him.

(9)

Slippery blood moans
a mute song of snake.

This is a visual description of the blood flowing across the ground from the wounds; *slippery* thus is visual rather than tactile, but with *snake* a tactile connotation is carried out (a pat Symbolist replacement of one sense apprehension by another); and *snake*, referring to another branch of Christian mythology, is another symbol of betrayal; Juan Antonio has been betrayed by the blood which escapes him, by his enemies. Line 26 might be construed as "a silent testimony of betrayal." This is the blood of Abel crying to Jehovah from the ground. But God hears not now. (Or perhaps the testimony is *mute* to the judge and the Civil Guard since they are of an alien tradition; they would not really understand.) *Snake* is also a classical symbol of fertility, but its song is mute — fertility has been negated. *Moans* recalls the two old women of the olive tree, but here the image is less traditional, nearer the actual reality, or refers to the action upon the stage rather than chorus; *mute,* of course, implies *death, song* stylizes the emotion aroused by the tragic nature of death, or of this death. *Song* gives one the impression of blood singing in the veins, but now as the blood flows over the ground, although it is the same blood, its singing is purposeless, or as it ceases to flow it becomes mute. *Song* from the poet's point of view would be the poem, *moans* would make the poem elegiac.

(10)

"Gentlemen of the Civil Guard:
here we have the same old story.
Here have died four Romans
and five Carthaginians."

The judge, obviously, is pronouncing judgment. *The same old story* rehearses, first, that gypsies are always feuding, getting into brawls, killing each other. But Arturo Barea, in his brilliant study *García Lorca, The Poet and the People,* makes a passing reference to *Reyerta,* quoting lines 23-30, and comments: "A good many Spaniards failed to understand the last lines, with their reference to the traditional masks in the religious processions of Andalusia, those legendary Jews, Romans, Carthaginians in fantastic, stylized costumes, belonging to rival confraternities, who often come to blows in drunken brawls." It may be that four of the dead wore Roman masks and costumes and five wore Carthaginian masks and costumes. If this is true, it seems to me a fault in the poem that this circumstance was not hinted at earlier, or that the masks and costumes were not earlier introduced, and a fuller poetic exploitation of such a suggestive element is not in evidence — although it may be, if one does accept Barea's explanation, that the *profiles* of line 8 forecast the masks; and, too, the allusions to Christian myth (cross, Mount of Olives, Calvary) might then gain additional ambiguity and irony in conjunction with a religious procession. I think that Lorca clearly intended in these lines to displace the present with the past; that is, Roman and Carthaginian blood runs in Spanish veins, Romans and Carthaginians fought on Spanish soil, possibly in this same canyon. This would develop the meaning of *the same old story.* It is possible, of course, that both of these readings may be right, and even within Lorca's intention, and, in that case, Barea's reading would give us the motivated meaning, and the latter reading offer the baggage.

(11)

The afternoon, mad with fig trees
and with hot rumors,
falls fainting on the wounded
thighs of the riders.

Mad with fig trees depicts the landscape from the point of view of the riders, an egocentric coign of vantage: for the riders the fig trees, not they, are bouncing up and down. *Hot* rumors describe the *rapid*

hoof-beats of the horses. *The afternoon . . . falls fainting* indicates that the afternoon is dying. The *wounded* thighs of the riders demonstrates the urgency of the riders, *pressing* on the horses' flanks, *demanding* greater speed. The fact that the dying afternoon, or sun, falls on the riders' thighs tells us that the riders flee westward; and that the sunlight on their thighs is meaningfully the hue of blood; and of course it might be that the escaping riders were indeed wounded by their enemies who were possibly afoot and so could reach but to their thighs with their knives.

(12)

And black angels were flying
through the western sky.
Angels with long tresses
and hearts of oil.

Black angels, again, are the riders who brought death and are now fleeing westward. The use of the imperfect tense with black angels (*were bringing* in line 13; *were flying* above) accomplishes three things: grammatically this image is italicized on the page; emotionally it is set apart, read in a minor key; rationally it specifies that death was in motion *before* the events in the canyon, it was destined that death should occur.

Now, instead of *great wings,* the black angels have *long tresses;* in the first image one had the picture of hovering, of menace; in the second one has the impression of flight (as Lorca has employed the image elsewhere: "and the other girls ran / pursued by their tresses"); and tresses as well as wings suggest knives, to continue that phase of the image. The *hearts of oil* completes the shawl and oil lamp equipment of the wake, as we remarked above. (Lorca has described these accouterments in other poems, for example in "Lamentation of Death": "I came to this world with eyes / and I go without them. / Lord of the greatest grief! / And then, / a lamp and a blanket / on the ground.")

Thematic Interpretation

The thematic triptych Passion, Fate, Death, ubiquitous in Lorca's work, is clearly apparent in *Reyerta.* Passion is embodied in the bull, the infuriated horses, the knives, fire; although the passion in this poem is that of a brawl, it is a passion within the mores of the tribe and such a passion is a kind of love, or its ambivalent otherself; and the images Lorca uses are phallic, erotic. Fate, the inevitable occurrence of what

is to occur, is expressed in several ways: (a) by the knives with their *independent* life — knives are made to kill regardless of the will of their owners; (b) by the insinuation that this is all in the cards, that men are caught by destiny; (c) by reference to the Christian story in which Jesus went to his inevitable death; (d) by the remark of the judge that this is the same old story, it always happens, and, by implication, always will; (e) by the historical displacement of the dead of the present by the dead of the past — Spain has always been a place of strife. Death is impersonated by *black* angels with knives, by the funeral equipment, by reference to the Christian cross, by the mute song of blood. (This is a pagan death, for there is no intimation of any transcendence of death; death is final: "You have died forever," Lorca later said of Ignacio in his "Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter.") But within both Christian and pagan or primitive traditions, death purifies; and this purification by death is a basic ritual in Lorca's work, although probably implicitly or unconsciously. The external evidence, the externalizations, of this primitive concept are everywhere patent (as in *Reyerta*: *snow water, lilies, fire* — all symbols of both death and purity, or purity through death.) Water, for instance, another symbol of purification, is an obsessive image (possibly inherited from purist Juan Ramón Jiménez) in Lorca's poetry. And it is significant that death is not only omnipresent but violent.

Lorca uses Christian mythology, but largely as it has been modified by the kind of Christianity peculiar to Spain, and as it has been understood by the gypsies (or by peasants, or by the simple, or by the innocent, or by the "uncivilized"); this is a Christianity of (at the same time) Senecan (and Seneca was a Spaniard) stoicism and what Ganivet called "sanctified African sensuality." It is fatalistic, symbolic, and cruelly erotic.

And one thinks of Euripides (Lorca is never far from the dramatic) and unbridled emotions leading to tragedy. But for Lorca even passion is inevitable, and inhibited or frustrated passion leads to tragedy. And to death.

MORGAN BLUM:

Train to Cambridge: Michaelmas Term, 1945

(Last stage of a journey from northern Bavaria)

The wheels turn swiftly now, the flange to rail
Close-ground and screeching out. Light fades before
The advancing echelons of night. A mind
Where even metaphors bespeak their ranged
And military mode, must fade. Then I
Must seek new mind to name or greet that face—
Strange, friendly, and non-echeloned—new tongue
To frame the ease and fierce impact of peace.

Some voices, near and British now, accent
This lush and autumn quiet of time with talk
Of rations and the rugger field. The past
Recedes. I think of violence, continents
And months behind, as one who knows his train's
Sure goal an English academic town.

I settle back and watch the window give
On scattered woodland and the harvest fields;
And looking on the fields, I wonder, "Is
This voyage the harvest, the autumn seeded by
Some spring god's death, the garner nascent in
The Nile's green rise?" I ask the strict anal-
ogy of men, unschooled in logic, who
Gave breath or legs that I might pass my ease
Of autumn in a scholar's shoes:

"You that
Have spent your fertilizing flood of being,
Do you find curtained eyes still crave the light
After dark surcease of the perjured loins?"
But while I ask, the mind's strict eye can see
Only the socket staring and the night . . .

"Then how can I repay all you whose blood
Begot the leisured contemplation which
I, saved, can look for in groined Cambridge halls?
How dedicate to you new-buried gods
What crop's oblation, what tithed recompense?"
But I hear merely the wheel-hum, and give
The chastened answer of the schoolboy mind:
"Only in this, and now, and for the time:
To hold your image bright before my eyes
Against tedium and the stratagems of dark;
And, filial, keep a dream of death secure
In face of ego and marauding change
That I may test each momentary lust
By bold exemplar and love's ritualed way.
And should the death of princes or a girl's
Slight frown disturb this studied wisdom, should
Your parent counsel and bright image fade
Before the dark negations of the will,
Then—savior, scapegoat—in October's ale
I'll pledge you, father, and your weight of guilt."

HYMAN SWETZOFF:

Pastoral

My neighbor's small son whose
father was still in Australia
was playing in the field on the other
side of my room with a boomerang.

He called to me shouting with a voice whose age
was still caught in sight and tone:
Look!

He grasped one end of the stick
whose curved almost right
angle had the look of a mouth

in the desert, thirst smoothing
the skin taut, making the jaw open and polished
and static, an embrace unfulfilled and crying.

He threw it.
Leaving his hand it became a whistle,
a shout, a whisper becoming
sometimes a smile.

It flew.
It formed a bracelet
which his hand could slip through.
I was sure it was going to god.

Just as I least expected
it returned a cry again in its shape.
I moved to get out of its way before
it circled us both. I stood
stockstill. I shivered. I heard
the flutter of wings.

Then he caught it in his hand. He curved
his lips and smiling stood
triumphant and laughing at me.

I don't know how he had become
so skilled without me. It seemed to me
that I had watched his every game and had told
him what to do so that his every movement
came from a thought that coincided
with me. It must have been

an early morning before his father left and before
I had risen from a sleep with breaking mirrors
still crashing in my ears.

Could I have taught him this?

I smiled. I looked away. I wondered
how much he knew.

Why Go to a Play

We rest in a hidden balance
a black striped cell
which won't become
who
won't come come out
till you
are ready to ring the proper bell.

So player for a plaything
don't linger by the road
come on come on
build the house connect
is a finger on the button
and a foot
in hell has nowhere to go.

The total in the hand
is the trick is just
the same. Don't point your finger
spoils repeats
is not
shame shame everybody knows
all the others for what
we may not be

everything passes but
nothing goes away.

M. L. ROSENTHAL:

Horace Gregory: The Catullus Translations

Early in Horace Gregory's literary career, we meet him as translator of Catullus and as a "conservator" in the fashion and spirit of Pound and Eliot. For epigraph to his 1931 volume of translations he used a poem of his own, "In Memoriam M. S. S., Obit 1923." M. S. S. — Moses Slaughter of the University of Wisconsin classics faculty — had been a most valued teacher who, because he divided his time between Wisconsin and the University of Rome, had come to symbolize for the poet the sense of both the American and the European past. It was natural that this poem should employ certain devices familiar to readers of *The Waste Land* and *The Cantos*. M. S. S. became, like Tiresias, the selfconscious and symbolic old man associated both with the whole history of culture and with its supposed present sterility. Another technique used was almost a convention by this time — the unexpected juxtapositions of time and place to give the effect of blending all experience into a unified human consciousness. On these devices was superimposed a third, the pure lyric outburst that transcends intellectual considerations and private memories alike:

> Here in this room, built in the core of Rome,
> sparrows are singing against the fall of rain. . . .

These lines are among numerous hints in this book of Gregory's early interest in and identification with D. H. Lawrence. The initial bird-image is pursued throughout the poem, until in the final stanza it has become a miraculous indication of victory over the fear of death:

> Split the skull of death. I enter him
> while sparrows rise from ancient trees
> sprung from the gardens of the late Valerius Catullus —
> sparrows sing
> out music from the Vergil-mad Aegean seas.

These sparrows are less like those which so delightfully distracted Catullus' lady-love than like that other bird of "Spring Morning" which recalled to Lawrence and his wife the special revelations to which they had won:

Ah, through the open door
Is there an almond tree
Aflame with blossom!
— Let us fight no more.

Among the pink and blue
Of the sky and the almond flowers
A sparrow flutters.
— We have come through.

The reminiscence of Lawrence is one of many suggestions in this book that Gregory was discovering himself as well as attempting to recover Catullus. His preface, which expresses admiration for Pound's work as an adapter of Latin and medieval French poetry, shows how far he had gone toward assimilating the elder poet's spirit and that of Eliot, described in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Eliot's essay tells us that "the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show." And Gregory says, "I have attempted to redefine the symbols of Roman life that have become shopworn in Anglo-classical vocabularies or have dropped into complete obscurity." His models will be Pound, whose adaptations are "among the best examples of what may be done in the way of recreating a literature that has been buried under tons of academic research for many centuries," and Synge, who translated Petrarch into the "vernacular of his own speech." The trouble with most classical translation, he holds, is its remoteness from the forms of pre-Augustan Rome, which were "intertwined," in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with "an Anglo-Christian ethic." Perhaps natural enough in those centuries, the mixture of conventions and the kind of vocabulary then employed have become archaic. The original values of the poetry have been completely lost, and new means are needed to approximate "the music of Catullus' Latin metres." But it is virtually impossible to render Latin metres accurately into English; "such an attempt inverts the order of English speech into absurd artificialities." Therefore Gregory's "compromise" will be to use unrhymed verse while approximating "wherever possible" the original versification, "modified by the speech of our own time." The object will be to make Catullus' self-portrait clear and convincing and to reproduce "the epigrammatic vigour and the rapid transition from lyrical beauty to outspoken grossness that every reader has found in the original text and which are often lost in the process of translation." The explanation

is convincing enough on its own terms, but it is easy now to see how eager Gregory was to study in the school of Pound and to apply Symbolist-Imagist techniques to so suitable a body of verse as that of Catullus.

How far he actually succeeded in catching the main spirit of the original through his free verse-forms and use of American vernacular is obviously a matter for scholars (good ones, that is) to decide. Literalists will doubtless object to the rendering of *Salax taberna* as "roadhouse" or *cacata carta* as "toilet paper." The Latin poems have their formal regularity, of course; and this fact can be used to justify their translation into some other conventional form. Thus, Charles Stuart Calverley rendered poem XXXI as a sonnet, apparently because it has fourteen lines:

> Gem of all isthmuses and isles that lie,
> Fresh or salt water's children, in clear lake
> Or ampler ocean: with what joy do I
> Approach thee, Sirmio!

Gregory's free, concrete handling of this poem may not be as "even," but it results in poetry with a more vital impact, while Calverley's poem is just another sonnet marching grimly to its death. Taking a cue from Tennyson's "Frater Ave Atque Vale," Gregory, with even greater felicity, wrote:

> O my little almost island, little island Sirmio,
> this brave eye, this green-bright jewel set in Neptune's fair
> estate
> of lucid waters and broad seas.
> And it's good to look upon you. . . .

— which is much closer to the buoyancy and sustained emphasis of

> *Paene insularum, Sirmio, insularamque*
> *ocelle, quascumque in liquentibus stagnis*
> *marique uasto fert uterque Neptunus. . . .*

Calverley, however, is not one of the more important English poets, and we may turn with greater reward perhaps to a comparison of Gregory's and Campion's translations of the famous fifth poem, beginning

> *Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,*
> *rumoresque senum seueriorum*
> *omnes unius aestimemus assis.*

Campion's first lines, like his whole translation, are gracefully melodic couplets:

> My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
> And though the saner sort our deeds reprove,
> Let us not weigh them. . . .

Gregory's opening is more abrupt, the language of the second line harsher and closer to the specific original meaning:

> Come, Lesbia, let us live and love
> nor give a damn what sour old men say.

Campion's lines were midway in a tradition running between Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd" and the Lucasta poems, and as his translation proceeded it became more and more a smoothly and elegantly artificial creation. Gregory, breaking away from that style — he might have made the first line even brusquer, however — begins like Donne, then shifts into a style like Cummings' "who's most afraid of death?" The whole poem is worth quoting, both because it illustrates his general method and because it calls for some comparison with Ben Jonson, who tried in his own way to "modernize" some of these same lines.

> Come, Lesbia, let us live and love,
> nor give a damn what sour old men say.
> The sun that sets may rise again
> but when our light has sunk into the earth,
> it is gone forever.
> Give me a thousand kisses,
> then a hundred, another thousand,
> another hundred
> and in one breath
> still kiss another thousand,
> another hundred.
> O then with lips and bodies joined
> many deep thousands;
> confuse
> their number
> so that poor fools and cuckolds (envious
> even now) shall never
> learn our wealth and curse us
> with their
> evil eyes.

The downward movement, at once suggesting a deepening of passion and an emotional intensification of argument, seems — with its broken lines, ejaculations, and parenthetical additions — to be a typical poem of the Cummings love-and-death variety. Yet it does exactly match the rapid turns and colloquial impulsiveness of

da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
aut ne quis malus inuidere possit,
cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

— and the interpolated "poor fools and cuckolds" merely reinforces the contrast between the scorn of the early lines and the "careless rapture" of the lovers. Jonson tried to catch the casual tone by Englishing Lesbia to "Celia" and adding a few English place-names: Romney, Chelsea, Thames. He tried for the casual touch, too, in his opening, altering the meaning at the same time:

Kiss me, sweet; the wary lover
Can your favors keep, and cover,
When the common courting jay
All your bounties will betray.

The short lines and flip diction were partially successful; but, besides changing the literal content of the poem here and in the place-name lines, Jonson shifted the proportions of the poems so that the wit and feeling of the kisses-passage largely disappeared:

First give a hundred,
Then a thousand, then another
Hundred, then unto the other
Add a thousand, and so more. . . .

This, the heart of the poem, is reduced to less than one-fifth its total length, while Gregory — like Catullus — gives it over half his entire space. By escaping the limitations of "Anglo-classical" convention, and by employing newer techniques, Gregory did succeed in coming closer to Catullus' poetic personality than earlier translators. One reason, in addition to his direct, lucid style, is that the "irregular" forms he used enabled him to cut his cloth to fit the originals. Hence his translations have something of the exactness that a running prose translation might

have, while the emotional pitch and general sense of patterned and witty statement provide a discipline at least as demanding as formal adherence to the traditional sonnet or the heroic couplet would be. Nor did he always find it necessary to use the roughness, slang, and sudden shifts of movement which he often found helpful. In poem XXXIV, for example, despite the absence of rhyme and the varied line-lengths, he achieved the needed effect of polish, reverence, and mystery in a manner recalling Jonson's brilliantly classical "Hymn to Diana."

> Boys and girls, we pledge allegiance
> to the moon, virgin Diana,
> chastity and innocence,
> boys and girls all sing Diana.

Control is the quality most evident here — an excellent support for any sort of unorthodoxy. Whether tenderness, awe, desire, ribaldry, or anger was to be expressed, the poet felt free to use any form which would best convey it. Not the least of his successes is the rendering of the two line poem XCIII, which both in the Latin and the English have the force of a thunderclap of defiance:

> *Nil nimium studeo, Caesar, tibi uelle placere,*
> *nec scire utrum sis albus an ater homo.*
>
> I shall not raise my hand to please you, Caesar,
> nor do I care if you are white or black.

It was not only by his freedom of line and image and his use of the element of surprise that Pound influenced these translations, and it was certainly not merely the influence of one translator upon another (which is not to undervalue the importance of translation as a discipline). The incidental parallels help reveal the general mode within which the younger poet was writing. We note, for instance, and take for granted the significance, that Gregory's ease with the particular form of poem I —

> Who shall receive my new-born book,
> my poems, elegant and shy,
> neatly dressed and polished?

— is related to Pound's elegant adaptation of Waller's style in "Envoi." And in the second poem, the reference to "that radiant lady" summons

up, as do many of the addresses to Lesbia, Audiart and the heroines of "Ballatetta" ("The broken sunlight for a helm she beareth"), "Apparuit," and "A Virginal." The idiom of Pound's *Cantos* and "Chinese" poems, too, is present in such lines as

> When I was wandering, foot-loose, in the Forum,
> Varus captured me and took me to his lady,
> pretty little piece; at first sight, not bad looking,
> nor did she lack refinement.

The dominant qualities of *Homage to Sextus Propertius* (an unusually difficult experiment in translation-adaptation) were virtuosity, irony, a sometimes bitter sexual exuberance, and a Mauberley-like air of decadence and loss. Gregory's Catullus has the first two of these qualities — although Pound's virtuosity has a special life of its own almost impossible to match — and the others in varying proportions. We must go to Pound's *Lustra,* however, or to scattered passages in the *Cantos* (such as the story of Jim X.), to find a parallel to such scurrility as

> Rufa from Bologna, wife of Menenius,
> spends her time abed
> draining the strength of Rufulus

and the numerous comments by Catullus on homosexual Romans of his day. And we must go to the greater *Cantos* to find the equal of Gregory's translations of the longer narratives and epithalamia (on which, again, Jonson's translations of the same poems had proved influential).

Out of this welter of parallels and influences, we may discern some of Gregory's talents as a lyric poet "in his own right." In a later essay on Landor, he was to give special praise to the *Hellenics* — especially "The Hamadryad" and "Iphigenia," in which "the figures of youthful love and sacrifice are graced with a purity of color and movement." By purity, he wrote, he meant a lucid statement of the simple truth. "I believe that in poetry the presence of simple truth, or the pure expression of it, cannot be called into being by anything less than art, nor can it be conjured out of a vacuum by an act of will." Like Yeats, the later Landor desired "to be a poet only through the demands of an inner being and compulsion, and not through the external circumstances of good fortune or bad, or to be dependent upon the mutations of poetic fame." The result was that for twenty years "he wrote each

poem as if it were his last," bringing about a "revival of the elegiac note in English poetry." Authenticity rather than originality was the mark of his work: "The ease of statement and its restraint, the finality of accent, the turn of an excellent conceit — all of which distinguish . . . true style in poetry — are there." In the Catullus translations, we find Gregory striving toward just these ideals which he associates with Yeats and Landor. Indeed, his translation of LX might well have been done by the former of these:

> Were you born of a lioness in the Libyan Mountains,
> or that half-woman monster Scylla,
> screaming in the lowest chambers of her womb,
> sent forth already merciless and hard,
> one who could never hear the cries of a man, even in
> his mortal agony,
> O heart made bitter and cruel beyond all measure.

The elegiac note is here combined with direct statement, if not quite restraint; most of the poems, in fact, provide variants of the same basic combination. For our purposes, it is of no great moment whether or not the effect is mainly due to the Latin original. In the final line just quoted, for example, as in some of the other translations, there is an echo of the *Spoon River Anthology,* but the fact does not counteract the special conditions of translation. For the brief summarizing formulation that concludes most of these poems is characteristic of a tradition easily inclusive enough to hold both Catullus and Masters. The important consideration, for us, is that Gregory feels at home with the style demanded by the convergence of an ancient elegiac tradition and a more "modern" one. So, often, the particular words chosen by Gregory, though they also are a fairly exact rendering of the Latin, may be said to be an equally exact impression of his own poetic personality. Such expressions as "give a damn," "our light has sunk into the earth," "lips and bodies joined," "many deep thousands," and "evil eyes" are both emphatic and impressionistic, conveying a total emotional atmosphere by their opposed kinds of evocativeness. The Latin, too, provides this sort of opposition, yet not in terms suggestive of the love-death association of courtly love as it comes to us by way of Pound and Cummings.

Elegy in the stricter sense we find in other poems, particularly those paying tribute to Catullus' dead brother. One of these, LXV, takes us beautifully through three subtly related but qualitatively distinct moments in a fairly complex poem which challenges all Gregory's skill

from the modulation of caesuras to the transition from pervasive melancholy — the dominant mood — to the urbanity of a comic-pathetic final image. This skill, too, carries Gregory through those poems whose effect depends mainly on a turn of wit, a toughness of invective or ridicule, or the shock of what he calls "moral grossness." Here the lessons learned by Eliot and Pound from Browning, especially about the dramatic monologue, and their own experiments in widening the usefulness of this mode, are seen to have been carefully studied by Gregory. But perhaps the most interesting manifestation of his talent for sympathetic adjustment of modern techniques to classical requirements are to be found in the more subjective lyric poems. In them we see the kinship with the author of "In Memoriam M. S. S." Thus, the four lines of XIV (b) recall the whole Romantic concern with the uncontrollable daemon and its visions of unspeakable depravity:

> If there is anyone
> who reads this foolishness,
> do not fall back in horror, fear to put your hands upon me,
> O you who read these lines. . . .

And again:

> This languid madness destroys you Catullus,
> long day and night shall be desolate, broken,
> as long ago ancient kings and rich cities fell into ruin.

There is the desolation of Gerard de Nerval's "El Desdichado" in these lines, travelling back in time to merge with the words of another poet who felt that a crackup, the "death of the world," was upon him. Gregory, elsewhere, has his Catullus say:

> I hate and love,
> and if you ask me why,
> I have no answer, but I discern,
> can feel, my senses rooted in eternal torture.

This is not quite *"nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior,"* and the difference is perhaps explained by the heightened self-awareness of the Symbolist tradition — "eternal torture" affecting Gregory as various sufferers in Dante's *Inferno* attracted Pound and Eliot. The intensity of suffering implied in our current language of sensibility is hard to avoid, if it were likely the poet wanted to avoid it. Even in the three short passages just quoted we can see that Gregory did not want to do so. One aspect of the heritage of the 1890's is revealed in a vocabu-

lary that resorts a bit too easily to such terms as "horror," "languid madness," "desolate," "ruin," and "eternal torture." A poem like VIII, in which feeling, self-irony, and concreteness are balanced off without loss of control, is more rewarding:

> Poor damned Catullus, here's no time for nonsense,
> Open your eyes, O idiot, innocent boy, look at what has happened:
> once there were sunlit days when you followed after
> wherever a girl would go, she loved with greater
> love than any woman knew.

Something of the thin, sweet pathos of "They flee from me who sometime did me seek" is in these cadenced lines, though the self-pity is much mitigated by the sophistication with which Gregory's Catullus cuts himself down to size. There is a further relationship between such lines and works as apparently unconnected as Wilder's *The Woman of Andros,* Moody's "The Menagerie," and *The Hamlet* of Laforgue, as well as the more obvious one with that most potent of poetic catalysts, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." In Gregory's hands, Catullus becomes one of those nostalgic links to the past that remind modern man of all that he has lost, or rather, has not become. He thus comes to represent more than "the classics" or freedom of sexual expression or the technical apprenticeship of a developing poet. To translate him means to identify oneself with two traditions, that of ancient Rome and that of English neoclassicism; but it means also, in this case, a translation of idioms and implied values out of those traditions into the difficult contemporary world with which the poet must come to terms. Somewhere between these opposed areas of existence waver the sensibilities of the translator-poet. For him, the elegiac mood is what they have in common, apart from the fact that "the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and the digestive tracts" — Eliot's equivalents for the sheer animal life of men at all times and everywhere — give their own unity to the objective life which the changing intelligence continually reviews. The intelligence that is keenly enough aware of these opposed "truths" is subject to a certain confusion and sense of lost identity. The stamp of death is on a great many of Gregory's poems; their individualism is not Bohemian but is necessitated by an atmosphere of disintegration, the severing of human bonds — loss of contact. Some of Catullus' outcries have the same stamp, and it is particularly with these in mind that we can assert that the translations were invaluable training for one of the most profoundly elegiac American poets of the twentieth century.

ITALO SVEVO:

The Mother

Translated by Ben Johnson

In a valley closed in by wooded hills, glowing in the colors of springtime, there rose, one beside the other, two large unadorned houses of stone and lime. They seemed fashioned by the same hand; and the gardens too, enclosed by hedgerows placed before each of the houses, were both of the same size and shape. But similar fates did not befall those who lived there.

In one of the gardens, while the dog slept on his chain and the farmer occupied himself in his fruitgrove, in a corner, apart from everything else, some baby chicks were speaking of their great experiences. There were older ones in the garden, but the chicks whose bodies still retained the form of the eggs from which they had hatched took pleasure in examining amongst themselves the life into which they had plunged because they were still not very accustomed to it. They had already known pleasure and pain because a few days' life is longer than it would seem to one who has stood it for years; and they knew a great deal, and understood that they had carried within themselves from the egg a part of that great experience. In fact, as soon as they saw light they knew that things needed a good looking-over, first with one eye and then with the other, to see if they had to eat or to protect themselves.

And they spoke of the world and of its vastness, with the trees and the hedges which enclosed it, and the house so large and so tall. They had already seen everything, but they saw better talking about it.

One of them, however, yellow-downed, well-fed — and therefore restless — could not content himself to speak of the things which he saw, but drew from the gentle heat of the sun an observation which he made immediately.

"We are well off, of course, because we have the sun, but I have known that in this world one is able to be even happier; that saddens me very much and I am telling you because it has also saddened you. The farmer's daughter said that we are miserable because we don't have a mother. She said it with accents of such strong feeling that I had to weep."

Another chick, whiter and by some hours younger than the first, —still remembering with gratitude the sweet atmosphere of his birth— protested.

"We have had a mother. It's that metal thing which is always warm, even during the bitterest cold, from which baby chicks come beautiful and perfected."

The yellow one, who for some time had carried inscribed upon his soul the words of the farmgirl, and had had, therefore, time enough to become quite pleased with himself dreaming of a mother until he imagined her as large as all the garden and as good as mash, exclaimed with a scorn directed as much at his challenger as at the mother of which the other spoke, "If one concerned himself with a dead mother everyone would have one. But our mother is alive and runs much faster than us. Perhaps she has wheels like the farmer's wagon. Thus she would be able to come to you without your needing to call her, to warm you when you are about to die from the cold of this world. At night, how fine it must be to have nearby a mother like that!"

Another chick spoke up. He was a brother of the others because he had come from the same machine. But he was shaped a little differently, with his broader beak and shorter, slender legs. He was called "the ill-mannered chick" because when he ate one could hear the threshing of his gullet. Actually he was a duckling who in home waters would have been considered very polite. In his presence also the farmgirl had spoken of a mother. It had happened once when a chick, trembling and overcome by cold in the grass, had died encircled by the others who had not given help because they had not felt the cold which touches other chicks. And the duckling, who had his little face poked through the group from the very base of his wide neck, had asserted directly and naively that when there is a mother the chicks cannot die.

The desire for a mother soon infected the entire yard and made it more lively (more disquieting, in the minds of the older ones). Many times the infantile diseases attacked the adults; and the diseases were more dangerous for them, and from time to time the ideas as well. The image of a mother which took seed in those little spring-warmed heads developed beyond measure, and during fine weather and times of plenty the healthy ones called themselves "Mother," and when the chicks were suffering, ducklings and baby turkey cocks became true brothers because they longed for the same mother.

Not wishing to be left out of things, one of the eldest one day swore that he would find the mother. He was the only one in the chicken-

yard who was christened, and he was called Curra because, when the farmer called *"Curra, curra"* with his apronful of mash, he was the first to run forward. He was already vigorous, a young cock in whose sprightliness was dawning the urge to fight. Fine and sharp as a blade, he required a mother first of all because the others admired him: the mother of which he spoke was capable of furnishing the very finest of things, therefore both the satisfaction of his ambitions and of his vanity.

One day, resolved, Curra escaped in a single jump over the thick hedge which twisted around his native ground. At the gate he immediately stopped, perplexed. Where would he find the mother in the immensity of that valley over which the clear blue sky stretched with even greater vastness? To him, so small, it was not possible to search in that immensity. Therefore he did not wander far from his native garden, the world he knew; and, thoughtful, he made a trip around it. Thus he arrived at the hedge of the other garden.

"If the mother is inside here," he thought, "I should find her immediately."

Save for the obstacle of infinite space, he did not have another cause for hesitation. And with one jump he also crossed that hedge and found himself in a garden very similar to that which he had left.

Here too there was a swarm of very young chicks who were carrying on a discussion amongst themselves in the thick grass. But here there was an animal which the other garden lacked. An enormous hen, perhaps ten times larger than Curra, was enthroned in the downy midst of the brood which — one saw it immediately — considered the fat, ponderous animal their chief and protector. And she did take care of all of them. She sent an admonition to those who wandered too far afield with sounds very much like those which the farmer's daughter used with her own chicks. But she made other sounds too. Every now and then she bowed over the weakest, covering them with all her body, certain of transmitting her own warmth.

"This is the mother," thought Curra with joy. "I have found her and I shall never leave her. How she will love me! I am the strongest and the most handsome of them all. And then too, it will be easy for me to be obedient because I already love her. How beautiful and majestic she is! I shall also help her to protect all of those little fools."

Without looking at him, the mother called. Curra approached, believing that he himself had been called. He saw her occupied in scratching the earth with rapid strokes of her great claws, and he

stopped, interested in that action which he witnessed for the first time. When she stopped, a little worm lay wriggling before her on the ground then swept free of grass. Now she clucked while the little ones around her, failing to comprehend, stared in fascination.

"Blockheads!" thought Curra. "They don't even understand that she wants them to eat the worm."

And still carried away by his enthusiasm for obedience, he sprang quickly upon the prey and swallowed it.

And then — poor Curra! — the mother fell upon him viciously. Curra did not immediately understand her action because he suspected that she, who had just found him, wished to caress him with great fury. Thankfully he would have accepted all of the caresses (of which he knew nothing, having never known a mother), and as a result he permitted her to hurt him. The blows which rained down upon him clearly were not kisses and quickly swept away all suspicions. Curra wanted to run away but the great bird struck him and, tripping him up, jumped all over him, sinking her claws into his belly.

With savage strength Curra did free himself and broke for the hedge. In his mad flight he tripped up some chicks who were in his way, and he left them chirping wildly with their legs in the air. Because of that he was able to save himself, for his enemy stopped an instant near the fallen ones. Having arrived at the hedge, despite the many branches and shoots, Curra, with one leap, carried his small and agile body into the open.

The mother, instead, was stopped through the connivance of the thick leaves. And there in the hedge she remained, majestic, watching as if from a window the intruder who, exhausted, had also stopped. She watched him with her terrible round eyes, red with anger.

"Who are you who takes the food which I have dug from the earth with so much effort?"

"I am Curra," the little chick said meekly. "But you, who are you? and why do you treat me so badly?"

To the two questions she gave but a single answer: "I am the mother," and proudly turned her back to him.

Some time thereafter Curra, by then a magnificent thoroughbred cock, found himself in an entirely different chickenyard. And one day he heard affectionate and plaintive talk from all of his new companions about their mother.

Reflecting upon his own terrible lot, he said with sadness, "My mother, instead, was a horrible monster and it would have been better if I had never known her."

BEN JOHNSON:

A Note on Italo Svevo

In 1873, when Ettore Schmitz was twelve years old, he and his brother Elio were sent from their home in Trieste to a commercial school in Segnitz, near Würzburg, in the Bavarian province of Swabia. Two decades later Schmitz, then an enthusiastic Italian nationalist, chose Italo and the Italian word for Swabia—Svevo—as the pseudonym under which to publish his first novel, *Una Vita.* This partly autobiographical novel passed unnoticed in Italy except for a single article.

In 1898 Svevo published *Senilita* (*As a Man Grows Older*), a novel of considerably greater maturity than his first; yet it received no reviews whatsoever. And Ettore Schmitz, the businessman, laid aside the pen of Italo Svevo, the writer, and settled down to commercial affairs until, in 1906, James Joyce arrived in Trieste to take up a position teaching English to the Berlitz School there.

Frequently called to London on business matters, Schmitz resolved to improve his English and began taking private lessons from the young Irish expatriate. Thus Joyce, who was interested in writing and had himself three chapters of a book he was to call *Dubliners,* came to know the works of Svevo and to become enthusiastic about them and their author: Svevo later became one of the prototypes for Joyce's Bloom, and the hair of Svevo's wife, Livia, was immortalized in the "Anna Livia Plurabelle" passage of *Finnegans Wake.* Reading Svevo's novels, Joyce urged their author to continue writing, insisting that he was an important writer who had been neglected.

When Joyce's importance in English literature had finally become established and he had taken up residence in Paris, he brought Svevo's works to the attention of publishers and critics in France, notably the *Nouvelle Revue Francaise, Le Navire d'Argent,* and Benjamin Crémieux, Paul-Henri Michel, and Valéry Larbaud. He also wrote Ford Madox Ford and Eliot (then editor of the *Criterion*), about Svevo. Almost simultaneously, following publication of *La coscienza di Zeno* in 1923, there appeared critical acclaim of Svevo in literary journals in both France and Italy.

On September 13, 1928, Svevo died at Motta di Livenza from injuries sustained in an automobile accident, with a reputation as indis-

putably the greatest Italian prose writer since Verga — and as the creator of original and highly perceptive works worthy of the company of Kafka, Proust, Sartre, Gide, and Joyce.

"The Mother," written in 1910, was first published in *Il Convegno* in 1927 and, after Svevo's death, in *La novella del buon vecchio e della bella fanciulla ed altri scritti.* The translator of the fable will this year render into English Livia Svevo's *Memorie* following its Italian publication in May.

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